

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## THE DOVE IN THE EAGLE'S NEST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE HEIR OF REDCLIFFE."

### CHAPTER I.

#### MASTER GOTTFRIED'S WORKSHOP.

THE upper lattices of a tall, narrow window were open, and admitted the view, of first some richly-tinted vine leaves and purpling grapes, then, in dazzling freshness of new white stone, the lacework fabric of a half-built minster spire, with a mason's crane on the summit, bending as though craving for a further supply of materials; and beyond, peeping through every crevice of the exquisite open fretwork, was the intensely blue sky of early autumn.

The lower longer panes of the window were closed, and the glass, divided into circles and quarrels, made the scene less distinct; but still the huge stone tower was traceable, and, farther off, the slope of a gently-rising hill, clothed with vineyards blushing into autumn richness. Below, the view was closed by the gray wall of a court-yard, laden with fruit-trees in full bearing, and inclosing paved paths that radiated from a central fountain, and left spaces between where a few summer flowers still lingered, and the remains of others showed what their past glory had been.

The interior of the room was wainscoted, the floor paved with bright red and cream-coloured tiles, and the tall stove in one corner decorated with the same. The eastern end of the apartment was adorned with an exquisite

small group carved in oak, representing the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, with the Holy Child instructed by Joseph in the use of tools, and the mother sitting with her book, "pondering these things in her heart." All around were blocks of wood and carvings in varying states of progress—some scarcely shaped out, and others in perfect completion. And the subjects were equally various. Here was an adoring angel with folded wings, clasped hands, and rapt face; here a majestic head of an apostle or prophet; here a lovely virgin saint, seeming to play smilingly with the instrument of her martyrdom; here a grotesque *miserere* group, illustrating a fairy tale, or caricaturing a popular fable; here a beauteous festoon of flowers and fruit, emulating nature in all save colour; and on the work-table itself, growing under the master's hand, was a long wreath, entirely composed of leaves and seed-vessels in their quaint and beauteous forms—the heart-shaped shepherd's purse, the mask-like skull-cap, and the crowned row of the henbane. The starred cap of the poppy was actually being shaped under the tool, from a green capsule, surmounted with purple velvety rays, which, together with its rough and wavy leaf, was held in the hand of a young maiden who knelt by the table, watching the work with eager interest.

She was not a beautiful girl—not one of those whose "bright eyes rain influence, and judge the prize." She was

too small, too slight, too retiring for such a position. If there was something lily-like in her drooping grace, it was not the queen lily of the garden that she resembled, but the retiring lily of the valley—so purely, transparently white was her skin, scarcely tinted by a roseate blush on the cheek, so tender and modest the whole effect of her slender figure, and the soft, downcast, pensive brown eyes, utterly dissimilar in hue from those of all around except perhaps the bright, quick ones of her uncle, the master-carver. Otherwise, his portly form, open visage, and good-natured stateliness, as well as his furred cap and gold chain, were thoroughly those of the German burgomaster of the fifteenth century; but those glittering black eyes had not ceased to betray their French or rather Walloon origin, though for several generations back the family had been settled at Ulm. Perhaps, too, it was Walloon quickness and readiness of wit that had made them, so soon as they became affiliated, so prominent in all the councils of the good free city, and so noted for excellence in art and learning. Indeed the present head of the family, Master Gottfried Sorel, was so much esteemed for his learning that he had once had serious thoughts of terming himself Master Gothofredus Oxalicus, and might have carried it out but for the very decided objections of his wife, Dame Johanna, and his little niece, Christina, to being dubbed by any such surname.

Master Gottfried had had a scape-grace younger brother named Hugo, who had scorned both books and tools, had been the plague of the workshop, and, instead of coming back from his wandering-year of improvement, had joined a band of roving Lanzknechts. No more had been heard of him for a dozen or fifteen years, when he suddenly arrived at the paternal mansion at Ulm half-dead with intermitting fever, and with a young, broken-hearted, and nearly expiring wife, his spoil in his Italian campaigns. His rude affection had utterly failed to console her for her desolated home and slaughtered kindred,

and it had so soon turned to brutality that, when brought to comparative peace and rest in his brother's home, there was nothing left for the poor Italian but to lie down and die, commending her babe in broken German to Hausfrau Johanna, and blessing Master Gottfried for his flowing Latin assurances that the child should be to them even as the little maiden who was lying in the God's-acre upon the hill-side.

And verily the little Christina had been a precious gift to the bereaved couple. Her father had no sooner recovered than he returned to his roving life, and, except for a report that he had been seen among the retainers of one of the robber barons of the Swabian Alps, nothing had been known about him; and Master Gottfried only hoped to be spared the actual pain and scandal of knowing when his eyes were blinded and his head swept off at a blow, or when he was tumbled headlong into a moat, suspended from a tree, or broken on the wheel: a choice of fates that was sure sooner or later to befall him. Meantime, both the burgomeister and burgomeisterinn did their utmost to forget that the gentle little girl was not their own; they set all their hopes and joys on her, and, making her supply the place at once of son and daughter, they bred her up in all the refinements and accomplishments in which the free citizens of Germany took the lead in the middle and latter part of the fifteenth century. To aid her aunt in all housewifely arts, to prepare dainty food and varied liquors, and to spin, weave, and broder, was only a part of Christina's training; her uncle likewise set great store by her sweet Italian voice, and caused her to be carefully taught to sing and play on the lute, and he likewise delighted in hearing her read aloud to him from the hereditary store of MSS. and from the dark volumes that began to proceed from the press. Nay, Master Gottfried had made experiments in printing and wood-engraving on his own account, and had found no head so intelligent, no hand so desirous to aid him, as his little Christina's, who, in

all that needed taste and skill rather than strength, was worth all his prentices and journeymen together. Some fine bold figures had been produced by their joint efforts; but these less important occupations had of late been set aside by the engrossing interest of the interior fittings of the great "Dome Kirk," which for nearly a century had been rising by the united exertions of the burghers, without any assistance from without. The foundation had been laid in 1377; and at length, in the year of grace 1472, the crown of the apse had been closed in, and matters were so forward that Master Gottfried's stall work was already in requisition for the choir.

"Three cubits more," he reckoned. "Child, hast thou found me fruits enough for the completing of this border?"

"O yes, mine uncle. I have the wild rosehip, and the flat shield of the moonwort, and a peapod, and more whose names I know not. But should they all be seed and fruit?"

"Yea, truly, my Stina, for this wreath shall speak of the goodly fruits of a completed life."

"Even as that which you carved in spring told of the blossom and fair promise of youth," returned the maiden. "Methinks the one is the most beautiful, as it ought to be;" then, after a little pause, and some reckoning, "I have scarce seed-pods enough in store, uncle; might we not seek some rarer shapes in the herb-garden of Master Gerhard, the physician? He, too, might tell me the names of some of these."

"True, child; or we might ride into the country beyond the walls, and seek them. What, little one, wouldst thou not?"

"So we go not far," faltered Christina, colouring.

"Ha, thou hast not forgotten the fright thy companions had from the Schlangenwald Reiters when gathering Maydew? Fear not, little coward; if we go beyond the suburbs we will take Hans and Peter with their halberts.

But I believe thy silly little heart can scarce be free for enjoyment if it can fancy a Reiter within a dozen leagues of thee."

"At your side I would not fear. That is, I would not vex thee by my folly, and I might forget it," replied Christina, looking down.

"My gentle child!" the old man said approvingly. "Moreover, if our good Kaiser has his way, we shall soon be free of the Reiters of Schlangenwald, and Adlerstein, and all the rest of the mouse-trap barons. He is hoping to form a league of us free imperial cities with all the more reasonable and honest nobles, to preserve the peace of the country. Even now a letter from him was read in the Town Hall to that effect; and, when all are united against them, my lords-mousers must needs become pledged to the league, or go down before it."

"Ah! that will be well," cried Christina. "Then will our waggons be no longer set upon at the Debateable Ford by Schlangenwald or Adlerstein; and our wares will come safely, and there will be wealth enough to raise our spire! O uncle, what a day of joy will that be when Our Lady's great statue will be set on the summit!"

"A day that I shall scarce see, and it will be well if thou dost," returned her uncle, "unless the hearts of the burghers of Ulm return to the liberality of their fathers, who devised that spire! But what trampling do I hear?"

There was indeed a sudden confusion in the house, and, before the uncle and niece could rise, the door was opened by a prosperous apple-faced dame, exclaiming in a hasty whisper, "Housefather, O housefather, there are a troop of Reiters at the door, dismounting already;" and, as the master came forward, brushing from his furred vest the shavings and dust of his work, she added in a more furtive, startled accent, "and, if I mistake not, one is thy brother!"

"He is welcome," replied Master Gottfried, in his cheery fearless voice; "he brought us a choice gift last time

he came; and it may be he is ready to seek peace among us after his wanderings. Come hither, Christina, my little one; it is well to be abashed, but thou art not a child who need fear to meet a father."

Christina's extreme timidity, however, made her pale and crimson by turns, perhaps by the infection of anxiety from her aunt, who could not conceal a certain dissatisfaction and alarm, as the maiden, led on either side by her adopted parents, thus advanced from the little studio into a handsomely-carved wooden gallery, projecting into a great wainscoted room, with a handsome carved stair leading down into it. Down this stair the three proceeded, and reached the stone hall that lay beyond it, just as there entered from the trellised porch, that covered the steps into the street, a tall thin wiry man, in a worn and greasy buff suit, guarded on the breast and arms with rusty steel, and a battered helmet with the vizor up disclosing a weather-beaten bronzed face, with somewhat wild dark eyes, and a huge grizzled moustache forming a straight line over his lips. Altogether he was a complete model of the lawless Reiter or Lanzknecht, the terror of Swabia, and the bugbear of Christina's imagination. The poor child's heart died within her as she perceived the mutual recognition between her uncle and the new comer; and, while Master Gottfried held out his hands with a cordial greeting of "Welcome home, brother Hugh," she trembled from head to foot, as she sank on her knees, and murmured, "Your blessing, honoured father."

"Ha? What, this is my girl? What says she? My blessing, eh? There then, thou hast it, child, such as I have to give, though they'll tell thee at Adlerstein that I am more wont to give the other sort of blessing! Now, give me a kiss, girl, and let me see thee? How now!" as he folded her in his rough arms, "thou art a mere feather, as slight as our sick Jungfrau herself." And then, regarding her, as she stood drooping, "Thou art not half the woman thy mo-

ther was—she was stately and straight as a column, and tall withal."

"True!" replied Hausfrau Johanna, in a marked tone; "but both she and her poor babe had been so harassed and wasted with long journeys and hardships, that with all our care of our Christina, she has never been strong or well-grown. The marvel is that she lived at all."

"Our Christina is not beautiful, we know," added her uncle, reassuringly taking her hand; "but she is a good and meek maiden."

"Well, well," returned the Lanzknecht, "she will answer the purpose well enough, or better than if she were fair enough to set all our fellows together by the ears for her. Camilla, I say—no, what's her name, Christina?—put up thy gear and be ready to start with me to-morrow morning for Adlerstein."

"For Adlerstein?" re-echoed the housemother, in a tone of horrified dismay; and Christina would have dropped on the floor but for her uncle's sustaining hand, and the cheering glance with which he met her imploring look.

"Let us come up to the gallery, and understand what you desire, brother," said Master Gottfried, gravely. "Fill the cup of greeting, Hans. Your followers shall be entertained in the hall," he added.

"Ay, ay," quoth Hugh, "I will show you reason over a goblet of the old Rosemburg. Is it all gone yet, brother Goetz? No? I reckon there would not be the scouring of a glass left of it in a week if it were at Adlerstein."

So saying, the trooper crossed the lower room, which contained a huge tiled baking oven, various brilliantly-burnished cooking utensils, and a great carved cupboard like a wooden bedstead, and, passing the door of the bath-room, clanked up the oaken stairs to the gallery, the reception-room of the house. It had tapestry hangings to the wall, and cushions both to the carved chairs and deep windows, which looked out into the street, the whole storey projecting into close proximity with the



corresponding apartment of the Syndic Moritz, the goldsmith on the opposite side. An oaken table stood in the centre, and the gallery was adorned with a dresser, displaying not only bright pewter, but goblets and drinking cups of beautiful-shaped and coloured glass, and saltcellars, tankards, &c. of gold and silver.

"Just as it was in the old man's time," said the soldier, throwing himself into the housefather's chair. "A handful of Lanzknechts would make short work with your pots and pans, good sister Johanna."

"Heaven forbid!" said poor Johanna under her breath.

"Much good they do you, up in a row there, making you a slave to furbishing them. There's more sense in a chair like this—that does rest a man's bones. Here, Camilla, girl, unlace my helmet! What, know'st not how? What is a woman made for but to let a soldier free of his trappings? Thou hast done it! There! Now my boots," stretching out his legs.

"Hans shall draw off your boots, fair brother," began the dame; but poor Christina, the more anxious to propitiate him in little things, because of the horror and dread with which his main purpose inspired her, was already on her knees, pulling with her small quivering hands at the long steel-guarded boot—a task to which she would have been utterly inadequate, but for some lazy assistance from her father's other foot. She further brought a pair of her uncle's furred slippers, while Reiter Hugh proceeded to dangle one of the boots in the air, expatiating on its frail condition, and expressing his intention of getting a new pair from Master Matthias, the sutor, ere he should leave Ulm on the morrow. Then, again, came the dreaded subject; his daughter must go with him.

"What would you with Christina, brother?" gravely asked Master Gottfried, seating himself on the opposite side of the stove, while out of sight the frightened girl herself knelt on the floor, her head on her aunt's knees,

trying to derive comfort from Dame Johanna's clasping hands, and vehement murmurs that they would not let their child be taken from them. Alas! these assurances were little in accordance with Hugh's rough reply, "And what is it to you what I do with mine own?"

"Only this, that, having bred her up as my child and intended heiress, I might have some voice."

"Oh! in choosing her mate! Some mincing artificer, I trow, fiddling away with wood and wire to make gauds for the fair-day! Hast got him here? If I like him, and she likes him, I'll bring her back when her work is done."

"There is no such person as yet in the case," said Gottfried. "Christina is not yet seventeen, and I would take my time to find an honest, pious burgher, who will value this precious jewel of mine."

"And let her polish his flagons to the end of her days," laughed Hugh grimly, but manifestly somewhat influenced by the notion of his brother's wealth. "What, hast no child of thine own?" he added.

"None, save in Paradise," answered Gottfried, crossing himself. "And thus, if Christina should remain with me, and be such as I would have her, then, brother, my wealth, after myself and my good housewife, shall be hers, with due provision for thee, if thou shouldst weary of thy wild life. Otherwise," he added, looking down, and speaking in an under tone, "my poor savings should go to the completing of the Dome Kirk."

"And who told thee, Goetz, that I would do ought with the girl that should hinder her from being the very same fat sourkrout-cooking, pewter-scrubbing housewife of thy mind's eye?"

"I have heard nothing of thy designs as yet, brother Hugh, save that thou wouldst take her to Adlerstein, which men greatly belie if it be not a nest of robbers."

"Aha! thou hast heard of Adlerstein! We have made the backs of your jolly merchants tingle as well as they could through their well-lined

doublets! Ulm knows of Adlerstein, and the Debateable Ford!"

"It knows little to its credit," said Gottfried, gravely; "and it knows also that the Emperor is about to make a combination against all the Swabian robber-holds, and that such as join not in it will fare the worse."

"Let Kaiser Fritz catch his bear ere he sells its hide! He has never tried to mount the Eagle's Ladder! Why, man, Adlerstein might be held against five hundred men by sister Johanna with her rock and spindle! 'Tis a free barony, Master Gottfried, I tell thee—has never sworn allegiance to Kaiser or Duke of Swabia either! Freiherr Eberhard is as much a king on his own rock as young Max—what's the rest of his name?—is of the Romans, and more too, for I never could find out that the Romans thought much of our king; and, as to gainsaying our old Freiherr, one might as well leap over the abyss at once."

"Yes, those old free barons are pitiless tyrants," said Gottfried, "and I scarce think I can understand thee aright when I hear thee say thou wouldst carry thy daughter to such an abode."

"It is the Freiherr's command," returned Hugh. "Look you, they have had wondrous ill-luck with their children; the Freiherrinn Kunigunde has had a dozen at least, and only two are alive, my young Freiherr and my young Lady Ermentrude, and no wonder you would say if you could see the gracious Freiherrinn, for surely Dame Holda made a blunder when she fished her out of the fountain woman instead of man. She is Adlerstein herself by birth, married her cousin, and is prouder and more dour than our old Freiherr himself—fitter far to handle shield than swaddled babe. And now our Jungfrau has fallen into a pining waste, that 'tis a pity to see how her cheeks have fallen away, and how she mopes and fades. Now, old Freiherr and her brother, they both dote on her, and would do anything for her. They thought she was bewitched, so we took old Mother Ilsebill and tried her with the ordeal of water; but, look

you, she sank as innocent as a puppy dog, and Ursel was at fault to fix on any one else. Then one day, when I looked into the chamber, I saw the poor maiden sitting, with her head hanging down, as if 'twas too heavy for her, on a high-backed chair, no rest for her feet, and the wind blowing sour all round her, and nothing to taste but scorched beef, or black bread and sour wine, and her mother rating her for foolish fancies that gave trouble. And, when my young Freiherr was bemoaning himself that we could not hear of a Jew physician passing our way to catch and bring up to cure her, I said to him at last that no doctor could do for her what gentle tendance and nursing would, and what the poor maid needed was to be cosseted and laid down softly, and fed with broths and possets, and all that women know how to do with one another. A proper scowl and hard words I got from my gracious lady, for wanting to put burgher softness into an Adlerstein; but my old lord and his son opened on the scent at once. 'Thou hast a daughter?' quoth the Freiherr. 'So please your gracious lordship,' quoth I; 'that is, if she still lives, for I left her a puny infant.' 'Well,' said my lord, 'if thou wilt bring her here, and her care restores my daughter to health and strength, then will I make thee my body squire, with a right to a fourth part of all the spoil, and feed for two horses in my stable.' And young Freiherr Eberhard gave his word upon it."

Gottfried suggested that a sick nurse was the person required rather than a child like Christina; but, as Hugh truly observed, no nurse would voluntarily go to Adlerstein, and it was no use to wait for the hopes of capturing one by raid or foray. His daughter was at his own disposal, and her services would be repaid by personal advantages to himself which he was not disposed to forego; in effect these were the only means that the baron had of requiting any attendance upon his daughter.

The citizens of old Germany had the strongest and most stringent ideas of parental authority, and regarded daugh-

ters as absolute chattels of their father ; and Master Gottfried Sorel, though he alone had done the part of a father to his niece, felt entirely unable to withstand the nearer claim, except by representations ; and these fell utterly disregarded, as in truth every counsel had hitherto done, upon the ears of Reiter Hugh, ever since he had emerged from his swaddling clothes. The plentiful supper, full cup of wine, and confections, and soft chair, together perhaps with his brother's grave speech, soon, however, had the effect of sending him into a doze, whence he started to accept civilly the proposal of being installed in the stranger's room, where he was speedily snoring between two feather beds.

Then there could be freedom of speech in the gallery, where the uncle and aunt held anxious counsel over the poor little dark-tressed head that still lay upon good Johanna's knees. The dame was indignant and resolute : "Take the child back with him into a very nest of robbers !—her thin innocent dove whom they had shielded from all evil like a very nun in a cloister ! She should as soon think of yielding her up to be borne off by the great Satan himself with his horns and hoofs."

"He is her father, housewife," said the master-carver.

"The right of parents is with those that have done the duty of parents," returned Johanna. "What said the kid in the fable to the goat that claimed her from the sheep that bred her up ? I am ashamed of you, housefather, for not better loving your own niece."

"Heaven knows how I love her," said Gottfried, as the sweet face was raised up to him with a look acquitting him of the charge, and he bent to smooth back the silken hair, and kiss the ivory brow ; "but Heaven also knows that I see no means of withholding her from one whose claim is closer than my own. None save one ; and to that even thou, housemother, wouldst not have me resort."

"What is it ?" asked the dame, sharply, yet with some fear.

"To denounce him to the sheriffs as one of the Adlerstein retainers who robbed Philipp der Schmidt, and have him fast laid by the heels."

Christina shuddered, and Dame Johanna herself recoiled ; but presently exclaimed, "Nay, you could not do that, good man, but wherefore not threaten him therewith ? Stand at his bedside in early dawn, and tell him that, if he be not off ere daylight with both his cut-throats, the halberdiers will be upon him."

"Threaten what I neither could nor would perform, mother ? That were a shrewish resource."

"Yet would it save the child," muttered Johanna. But, in the meantime, Christina was rising from the floor, and stood before them with loose hair, tearful eyes, and wet, flushed cheeks. "It must be thus," she said, in a low but not unsteady voice. "I can bear it better since I have heard of the poor young lady, sick and with none to care for her. I will go with my father ; it is my duty. I will do my best ; but oh ! uncle, so work with him that he may bring me back again."

"This from thee, Stina !" exclaimed her aunt, "from thee who art sick for fear of a Lanzknecht !"

"The saints will be with me, and you will pray for me," said Christina, still trembling.

"I tell thee, child, thou know'st not what these vile dens are. Heaven forbid thou shouldst !" exclaimed her aunt. "Go only to Father Balthazar, housefather, and see if he doth not call it a sending of a lamb among wolves."

"Mind'st thou the carving I did for Father Balthazar's own oratory !" replied Master Gottfried.

"I talk not of carving ! I talk of our child !" said the dame, petulantly.

"*Ut agnus inter lupos*," softly said Gottfried, looking tenderly, though sadly, at his niece, who not only understood the quotation, but well remembered the carving of the cross-marked lamb going forth from its fold among the howling wolves.

"Alas ! I am not an apostle," said she.

"Nay, but, in the path of duty, 'tis the same hand that sends thee forth," answered her uncle, "and the same will guard thee."

"Duty, indeed!" exclaimed Johanna. "As if any duty could lead that silly helpless child among that herd of evil men, and women yet worse, with a good-for-nothing father, who would sell her for a good horse to the first dissolute Junker who fell in his way."

"I will take care that he knows it is worth his while to restore her safe to us. Nor do I think so ill of Hugh as thou dost, mother. And, for the rest, Heaven and the saints and her own discretion must be her guard till she shall return to us."

"How can Heaven be expected to protect her when you are flying in its face by not taking counsel with Father Balthazar?"

"That shalt thou do," replied Gottfried, readily, and secure that Father Balthazar would see the matter in the same light as himself, and tranquillize the good woman. It was not yet so late but that a servant could be despatched with a request that Father Balthazar, who lived not many houses off in the same street, would favour the Burgomeisterinn Sorel by coming to speak with her. In a few minutes he appeared,—an aged man, with a sensible face, of the fresh pure bloom preserved by a temperate life. He was a secular parish-priest, and, as well as his friend Master Gottfried, held greatly by the views left by the famous Strasburg preacher, Master John Tauler. After the good housemother had, in strong terms, laid the case before him, she expected a trenchant decision on her own side, but, to her surprise and disappointment, he declared that Master Gottfried was right, and that, unless Hugh Sorel demanded anything absolutely sinful of his daughter, it was needful that she should submit. He repeated, in stronger terms, the assurance that she would be protected in the endeavour to do right, and the Divine promises which he quoted from the Latin Scriptures gave some comfort

to the niece, who understood them, while they impressed the aunt, who did not. There was always the hope that, whether the young lady died or recovered, the conclusion of her illness would be the term of Christina's stay at Adlerstein, and with this trust Johanna must content herself. The priest took leave, after appointing with Christina to meet her in the confessional early in the morning before mass; and half the night was spent by the aunt and niece in preparing Christina's wardrobe for her sudden journey.

Many a tear was shed over the tokens of the little services she was wont to render, her half-done works, and pleasant habits, so suddenly broken off, and all the time Hausfrau Johanna was running on with a lecture on the diligent preservation of her maiden discretion, with plentiful warnings against swaggering men-at-arms, drunken Lanzknechts, and, above all, against young barons, who most assuredly could mean no good by any burgher maiden. The good aunt blessed the saints that her Stina was likely only to be lovely in affectionate home eyes; but, for that matter, idle men, shut up in a castle, with nothing but mischief to think of, would be dangerous to Little Three Eyes herself, and Christina had best never stir a yard from her lady's chair, when forced to meet them. All this was interspersed with motherly advice how to treat the sick lady, and receipts for cordials and possets; for Johanna began to regard the case as a sort of second-hand one of her own. Nay, she even turned it over in her mind whether she should not offer herself as the Lady Ermentrude's sick-nurse, as being a less dangerous commodity than her little niece; but fears for the well-being of the master-carver, and his Wirthschaft, and still more the notion of gossip Gertrude Grundt hearing that she had ridden off with a wild Lanzknecht, made her at once reject the plan, without even mentioning it to her husband or his niece.

By the time Hugh Sorel rolled out from between his feather beds, and was about to don his greasy buff, a hand-

some new suit, finished point device, and a pair of huge boots to correspond, had been laid by his bedside.

"Ho, ho! Master Goetz," said he, as he stumbled into the Stube, "I see thy game. Thou wouldst make it worth my while to visit the father-house at Ulm?"

"It shall be worth thy while, indeed, if thou bringest me back my white dove," was Gottfried's answer.

"And how if I bring her back with a strapping Reiter son-in-law?" laughed Hugh. "What welcome should the fellow receive?"

"That would depend on what he might be," replied Gottfried; and Hugh, his love of tormenting a little allayed by satisfaction in his buff suit, and by an eye to a heavy purse that lay beside his brother's hand on the table, added, "Little fear of that. Our fellows would look for lustier brides than yon little pale face. 'Tis whiter than ever this morning,—but no tears. That is my brave girl."

"Yes, father, I am ready to do your bidding," replied Christina, meekly.

"That is well, child. Mark me, no tears. Thy mother wept day and night, and, when she had wept out her tears, she was sullen, when I would have been friendly towards her. It was the worse for her. But, so long as thou art good daughter to me, thou shalt find me good father to thee;" and for a moment there was a kindness in his eye which made it sufficiently like that of his brother to give some protection to the shrinking heart that he was rending from all it loved; and she steadied her voice for another gentle profession of obedience, for which she felt strengthened by the morning's orisons.

"Well said, child. Now canst sit on old Nibelung's croup? His backbone is somewhat sharper than if he had battened in a citizen's stall; but, if thine aunt can find thee some sort of pillion, I'll promise thee the best ride thou hast had since we came from Innspruck, ere thou canst remember."

"Christina has her own mule," replied her uncle, "without troubling Nibelung to carry double."

"Ho! her own! An overfed burgo-master sort of a beast, that will turn restive at the first sight of the Eagle's Ladder! However, he may carry her so far, and, if we cannot get him up the mountain, I shall know what to do with him," he muttered to himself.

But Hugh, like many a gentleman after him, was recusant at the sight of his daughter's luggage; and yet it only loaded one sumpter mule, besides forming a few bundles which could be easily bestowed upon the saddles of his two *knappen*, and her lute, which hung by a silken string on her arm. Both she and her aunt thought she had been extremely moderate; but his cry was, What could she want of so much? Her mother had never been allowed more than would go into a pair of saddlebags; and his own Jungfrau—she had never seen so much gear together in her life; he would be laughed to scorn for his presumption in bringing such a fine lady into the castle; it would be well if Freiherr Eberhard's bride brought half as much.

Still he had a certain pride in it—he was, after all, by birth and breeding a burgher—and there had been evidently a softening and civilizing influence in the night spent beneath his paternal roof, amid old habits, and perhaps likewise in the submission he had met with from his daughter. The attendants, too, who had been pleased with their quarters, readily undertook to carry their share of the burthen, and, though he growled and muttered a little, he at length was won over to consent, chiefly, as it seemed, by Christina's sweet readiness to leave behind the bundle that contained her holiday kirtle.

He had been spared all needless irritation. Before his waking, Christina had been at the priest's cell, and had received his last blessings and counsels, and she had, on the way back, exchanged her farewells and tears with her two dearest friends, Barbara Schmid, and Regina Grundt, confiding to the former her cage of doves, and to the latter the myrtle, which, like every German maiden, she cherished in her window,



to supply her future bridal wreath. Now pale as death, but so resolutely composed as to be almost disappointing to her demonstrative aunt, she quietly went through her home partings; while Hausfrau Johanna adjured her father by all that was sacred to be a true guardian and protector of the child, and he could not forbear from a few tormenting inquiries of the Lanzknecht son-in-law. Their effect was to make the good dame more passionate in her embraces and admonitions to Christina to take care of herself. She would have a mass said every day that Heaven might have a care of her!

Master Gottfried was going to ride as far as the confines of the free city's territory, and his round, sleek, cream-coloured palfrey, used to ambling in civic processions, was as great a contrast to raw-boned, wild-eyed Nibelung, all dappled with misty grey, as was the stately, substantial burgher to his lean, hungry-looking brother, or Dame Johanna's dignified, curled, white poodle, which was forcibly withheld from following Christina, to the coarse-bristled, wolfish-looking hound who glared at the household pet with angry and contemptuous eyes, and made poor Christina's heart throb with terror whenever it bounded near her.

Close to her uncle she kept, as beneath the trellised porches that came down from the projecting gables of the burgher's houses many a well-known face gazed and nodded, as they took their way through the crooked streets, many a beggar or poor widow waved her a blessing. Out into the marketplace, with its clear fountain adorned with arches and statues, past the rising Dome Kirk, where the swarms of workmen unbonneted to the master-carver, and the Reiter paused with an irreverent sneer at the small progress made since he could first remember the building. How poor little Christina's soul clung to every cusp of the lace-work spire, every arch of the window, each of which she had hailed as an achievement! The tears had wellnigh blinded her in a gush of feeling that came on her unawares,

and her uncle had his own way as he carried her under the arch of the tall and beautifully-sculptured bridge tower, and over the noble bridge across the Danube.

Her uncle spoke much, low and earnestly, to his brother. She knew it was in commendation of her to his care, and an endeavour to impress him with a sense of the kind of protection she would require, and she kept out of ear-shot. It was enough for her to see her uncle still, and feel that his tenderness was with her, and around her. But at last he drew his rein. "And now, my little one, the daughter of my heart, I must bid thee farewell," he said.

Christina could not be restrained from springing from her mule, and kneeling on the grass to receive his blessing, her face hidden in her hands, that her father might not see her tears.

"The good God bless thee, my child," said Gottfried, who seldom invoked the saints; "bless thee, and bring thee back in His own good time. Thou hast been a good child to us; be so to thine own father. Do thy work, and come back to us again."

The tears rained down his cheeks, as Christina's head lay on his bosom, and then with a last kiss he lifted her again on her mule, mounted his horse, and turned back to the city, with his servant.

Hugh was merciful enough to let his daughter gaze long after the retreating figure ere he summoned her on. All day they rode, at first through meadow lands and then through more broken, open ground, where at mid-day they halted, and dined upon the plentiful fare with which the housemother had provided them, over which Hugh smacked his lips, and owned that they did live well in the old town! Could Christina make such pasties?

"Not as well as my aunt."

"Well, do thy best, and thou wilt win favour with the baron."

The evening began to advance, and Christina was very weary, as the purple mountains that she had long watched

with a mixture of fear and hope began to look more distinct, and the ground was often in abrupt ascents. Her father, without giving space for complaints, hurried her on. He must reach the Debateable Ford ere dark. It was, however, twilight when they came to an open space, where, at the foot of thickly forest-clad rising ground, lay an expanse of turf and rich grass, through which a stream made its way, standing in a wide tranquil pool as if to rest after its rough course from the mountains. Above rose, like a dark wall, crag upon crag, peak on peak, in purple masses, blending with the sky; and Hugh, pointing upwards to a turreted point, apparently close above their heads, where a star of light was burning, told her that there was Adlerstein, and this was the Debateable Ford.

In fact, as he explained, while splashing through the shallow expanse, the stream had changed its course. It was the boundary between the lands of Schlangenwald and Adlerstein, but had within the last sixty years burst forth in a flood, and had then declined to return to its own bed, but had flowed in a fresh channel to the right of the former. The Freiherren von Adlerstein claimed the ground to the old channel, the Grafen von Schlangenwald held that the river was the landmark, and the dispute had a greater importance than seemed explained from the worth of the rushy space of ground in question, for this was the passage of the Italian merchants on their way from Constance, and every load that was overthrown in the river was regarded as the lawful prey of the noble on whose banks the catastrophe befell.

Any freight of goods was anxiously watched by both nobles, and it was not their fault if no disaster befell the travellers. Hugh talked of the Schlangenwald marauders with the bitterness of a deadly feud, but manifestly did not breathe freely till his whole convoy were safe across both the wet and the dry channel.

Christina supposed they should now ascend to the castle; but her father

laughed, saying that the castle was not such a step off as she fancied, and that they must have daylight for the Eagle's Stairs. He led the way through the trees, up ground that she thought mountain already, and finally arrived at a miserable little hut, which served the purpose of an inn.

He was received there with much obsequiousness, and was plainly a great authority there. Christina, weary and frightened, descended from her mule, and was put under the protection of a wild, rough-looking peasant woman, who stared at her like something from another world, but at length showed her a nook behind a mud partition, where she could spread her mantle, and at least lie down, and tell her beads unseen, if she could not sleep in the stifling, smoky atmosphere, amid the sounds of carousal among her father and his fellows.

The great hound came up and smelt her. His outline was so wolfish, that she had nearly screamed; but, more in terror at the men who might have helped her than even at the beast, she tried to smoothe him with her trembling hand, whispered his name of "Festhold," and found him licking her hand, and wagging his long rough tail. And he finally lay down at her feet, as though to protect her.

"Is it a sign that good angels will not let me be hurt?" she thought, and, wearied out, she slept.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE EYRIE.

CHRISTINA SOREL awoke to a scene most unlike that which had been wont to meet her eyes in her own little wainscoted chamber high in the gabled front of her uncle's house. It was a time when the imperial free towns of Germany had advanced nearly as far as those of Italy in civilization, and had reached a point whence they retrograded grievously during the Thirty Years' War, even to an extent that they have never entirely recovered. The country

immediately around them shared the benefits of their civilization, and the free peasant-proprietors lived in great ease and prosperity, in beautiful and picturesque farmsteads, enjoying a care-less abundance, and keeping numerous rural or religious feasts, where old Teutonic mythological observances had received a Christian colouring and adaptation.

In the mountains, or around the castles, it was usually very different. The elective constitution of the empire, the frequent change of dynasty, the many disputed successions, had combined to render the sovereign authority uncertain and feeble, and it was seldom really felt save in the hereditary dominions of the Kaiser for the time being. Thus, while the cities advanced in the power of self-government, and the education it conveyed, the nobles, especially those whose abodes were not easily accessible, were often practically under no government at all, and felt themselves accountable to no man. The old wild freedom of the Suevi, and other Teutonic tribes, still technically, and in many cases practically, existed. The Heretogen, Heerzogen, or as we call them, Dukes, had indeed accepted employment from the Kaiser as his generals, and had received rewards from him; the Gerefen, or Graffen, of all kinds were his judges, the titles of both being proofs of their holding commissions from, and thus dependent on, the court. But the *Freiherren*, a word very inadequately represented by our French term of baron, were absolutely free, "never in bondage to any man," holding their own, and owing no duty, no office, poorer because unendowed by the royal authority, but holding themselves infinitely higher than the pensioners of the court. Left behind, however, by their neighbours, who did their part by society, and advanced with it, the *Freiherren* had been for the most part obliged to give up their independence and fall into the system, but so far in the rear, that they ranked, liked the barons of France and England, as the last order of nobility.

Still, however, in the wilder and

more mountainous parts of the country, some of the old families of unreduced, truly free *Freiherren* lingered, their hand against every man, every man's hand against them, and even becoming more savage, both positively and still more proportionately, as their isolation and the general progress around them became greater. The House of Austria, by gradually absorbing hereditary states into its own possessions, was, however, in the fifteenth century, acquiring a preponderance that rendered its possession of the imperial throne almost a matter of inheritance, and moreover rendered the supreme power far more effective than it had ever previously been. *Freidrich III.* a man still in full vigour, and with an able and enterprising son already elected to the succession, was making his rule felt, and it was fast becoming apparent that the days of the independent baronies were numbered, and that the only choice that would soon be left them would be between making terms and being forcibly reduced. *Von Adlerstein* was one of the oldest of these free families. If the lords of the Eagle's Stone had ever followed the great *Konrads* and *Freidrichs* of Swabia in their imperial days, the descendants had taken care to forget the weakness, and believed themselves absolutely free from all allegiance.

And the wildness of their territory was what might be expected from their hostility to all outward influences. The hostel, if it deserved the name, was little more than a charcoal-burner's hut, hidden in the woods at the foot of the mountain, serving as a halting-place for the *Freiherren's* retainers ere they attempted the ascent. The inhabitants were allowed to ply their trade of charring wood in the forest on condition of supplying the castle with charcoal, and of affording a lodging to the followers on occasions like the present.

Grimy, half-clad, and brawny, with the whites of his eyes gleaming out of his black face, *Jobst the Kohler* startled *Christina* terribly when she came into the outer room, and met him returning from his night's work, with his long

stoking-pole in his hand. Her father shouted with laughter at her alarm.

"Thou thinkest thyself in the land of the kobolds and dwarfs, my girl! Never mind, thou wilt see worse than honest Jobst before thou hast done. Now, eat a morsel and be ready—mountain air will make thee hungry ere thou art at the castle. And, hark thee, Jobst, thou must give stable-room to yon sumpter-mule for the present, and let some of my daughter's gear lie in the shed."

"O father!" exclaimed Christina, in dismay.

"We'll bring it up, child, by piece-meal," he said in a low voice, "as we can; but, if such a freight came to the castle at once, my lady would have her claws on it, and little more wouldst thou ever see thereof. Moreover, I shall have enough to do to look after thee up the ascent, without another of these city-bred beasts."

"I hope the poor mule will be well cared for. I can pay for—" began Christina, but her father squeezed her arm, and drowned her soft voice in his loud tones.

"Jobst will take care of the beast, as belonging to me. Woe betide him, if I find it the worse!"—and his added imprecations seemed unnecessary, so earnest were the asseverations of both the man and his wife that the animal should be well cared for.

"Look you, Christina," said Hugh Sorel, as soon as he had placed her on her mule and led her out of hearing, "if thou hast any gold about you, let it be the last thing thou ownest to any living creature up there." Then, as she was about to speak—"Do not even tell me. I *will* not know." The caution did not add much to Christina's comfort; but she presently asked, "Where is thy steed, father?"

"I sent him up to the castle with the Schneiderling and Yellow Lorentz," answered the father. "I shall have ado enough on foot with thee before we are up the Ladder."

The father and daughter were meantime proceeding through a dark path

through oak and birch woods, constantly ascending, until the oak grew stunted and disappeared, and the opening glades showed steep, stony, torrent-furrowed ramparts of hillside above them, looking to Christina's eyes as if she were set to climb up the cathedral side like a snail or a fly. She quite gasped for breath at the very sight, and was told in return to wait and see what she would yet say to the Adlerstreppe, or Eagle's Ladder. Poor child! she had no raptures for romantic scenery; she knew that jagged peaks made very pretty backgrounds in illuminations, but she had much rather have been in the smooth meadows of the environs of Ulm. The Danube looked much more agreeable to her, silver-winding between its green banks, than did the same waters leaping down with noisy voices in their stony, worn beds to feed the river that she only knew in his grave breadth and majesty. Yet, alarmed as she was, there was something in the exhilaration and elasticity of the mountain air that gave her an entirely new sensation of enjoyment and life, and seemed to brace her limbs and spirits for whatever might be before her; and, willing to show herself ready to be gratified, she observed on the freshness and sweetness of the air.

"Thou find'st it out, child? Ay, 'tis worth all the feather-beds and pouncet boxes in Ulm; is it not? That accursed Italian fever never left me till I came up here. A man can scarce draw breath in your foggy meadows below there. Now then, here is the view open. What think you of the Eagle's Nest?"

For, having passed beyond the region of wood, they had come forth upon the mountain-side. A not immoderately steep slope of boggy, mossy-looking ground covered with bilberries, cranberries, &c. and with bare rocks here and there rising, went away above out of her ken; but the path she was upon turned round the shoulder of the mountain, and to the left, on a ledge of rock cut off apparently on their side by a deep ravine, and with a sheer precipice above and below it, stood a red stone pile, with one turret far above the rest.

"And this is Schloss Adlerstein?" she exclaimed.

"That is Schloss Adlerstein; and there shalt thou be in two hours' time, unless the devil be more than usually busy, or thou mak'st a fool of thyself. If so, not Satan himself could save thee."

It was well that Christina had resolution to prevent her making a fool of herself on the spot, for the thought of the pathway turned her so dizzy that she could only shut her eyes, trusting that her father did not see her terror. Soon the turn round to the side of the mountain was made, and the road became a mere track worn out on the turf on the hill-side, with an abyss beneath, close to the edge of which the mule, of course, walked.

When she ventured to look again, she perceived that the ravine was like an enormous crack open on the mountain-side, and that the stream that formed the Debateable Ford flowed down the bottom of it. The ravine itself went probably all the way up the mountain, growing shallower as it ascended higher; but here, where Christina beheld it, it was extremely deep, and savagely desolate and bare. She now saw that the Eagle's Ladder was a succession of bare gigantic terraces of rock, of which the opposite side of the ravine was composed, and on one of which stood the castle. It was no small mystery to her how it had ever been built, or how she was ever to get there. She saw in the opening of the ravine the green meadows and woods far below; and, when her father pointed out to her the Debateable Ford, apparently much nearer the castle than they themselves were at present, she asked why they had so far overpassed the castle and come by this circuitous course.

"Because," said Hugh, "we are not eagles outright. Seest thou not, just beyond the castle court, this whole crag of ours breaks off short, falls like the town wall straight down into the plain; even this cleft that we are crossing by the only road a horse can pass breaks off short and sudden too, so that the

river is obliged to take leaps nought else but a chamois could compass. A footpath there is, and Freiherr Eberhard takes it at times, being born to it; but even I am too stiff for the like. Ha, ha! Thy uncle may talk of the Kaiser and his League, but he would change his note if we had him here."

"Yet castles have been taken by hunger," said Christina.

"What, knowest thou so much?—True! But look you," pointing to a white foamy thread that descended the opposite steeps, "yonder beck dashes through the castle court, and it never dries; and see you the ledge the castle stands on? It winds on out of your sight, and forms a path which leads to the village of Adlerstein, out on the other slope of the mountains; and ill were it for the serfs if they victualled not the castle well."

The fearful steepness of the ground absorbed all Christina's attention. The road, or rather stairs, came down to the stream at the bottom of the fissure, and then went again on the other side up still more tremendous steeps, which Hugh climbed with a staff, sometimes with his hand on the bridle, but more often only keeping a watchful eye on the sure-footed mule, and an arm to steady his daughter in the saddle when she grew absolutely faint with giddiness at the abyss around her. She was too much in awe of him to utter cry or complaint, and, when he saw her effort to subdue her mortal terror, he was far from unkind, and let her feel his protecting strength.

Presently a voice was heard above—"What, Sorel, hast brought her! Frudchen is wearying for her."

The words were in the most boorish dialect and pronunciation, the stranger to Christina's ears, because intercourse with foreign merchants and a growing affectation of Latinism had much refined the city language to which she was accustomed, and she was surprised to perceive by her father's gesture and address that the speaker must be one of the lords of the castle. She looked up, and saw on the pathway above her a



tall large-framed man, his skin dyed red with sun and wind, in odd contrast with his pale shaggy hair, moustache, and beard, as though the weather had tanned the one and bleached the other. His dress was an even shabbier buff suit than her father had worn, but with a richly embroidered belt sustaining a hunting-horn with finely-chased ornaments of tarnished silver, and an eagle's plume was fastened into his cap with a large gold Italian coin. He stared hard at the maiden, but vouchsafed her no token of greeting—only distressed her considerably by distracting her father's attention from her mule by his questions about the journey, all in the same rude coarse tone and phraseology. Some amount of illusion was dispelled. Christina was quite prepared to find the mountain lords dangerous ruffians, but she had expected the graces of courtesy and high birth; but, though there was certainly an air of command and freedom of bearing about the present specimen, his manners and speech were more uncouth than those of any newly-caught apprentice of her uncle, and she could not help thinking that her good aunt Johanna need not have troubled herself about the danger of her taking a liking to any such young Freiherr as she here beheld.

By this time a last effort of the mule had climbed to the level of the castle. As her father had shown her, there was precipice on two sides of the building; on the third, a sheer wall of rock going up to a huge height before it reached another of the Eagle's Steps; and on the fourth, where the gateway was, the little beck had been made to flow in a deep channel that had been hollowed out to serve as a moat, before it bounded down to swell the larger water-course in the ravine. A temporary bridge had been laid across; the drawbridge was out of order, and part of Hugh's business had been to procure materials for mending its apparatus. Christina was told to dismount and cross on foot. The unrailed board, so close to the abyss, and with the wild water foaming above and below, was dreadful to her; and, though

she durst not speak, she hung back with an involuntary shudder, as her father, occupied with the mule, did not think of giving her a hand. The young baron burst out into an unrestrained laugh—a still greater shock to her feelings; but at the same time he roughly took her hand, and almost dragged her across, saying, "City bred, ho, ho!" "Thanks, sir," she strove to say, but she was very near weeping with the terror and strangeness of all around.

The low-browed gateway, barely high enough to admit a man on horseback, opened before her, almost to her feelings like the gate of the grave, and she could not help crossing herself, with a silent prayer for protection, as she stepped under it, and came into the castle court—not such a court as gave its name to fair courtesy, but, if truth must be told, far more resembling an ill-kept, ill-savoured stable-yard, with the piggeries opening into it. In unpleasantly close quarters, the Schneiderlein, or little tailor, *i. e.* the biggest and fiercest of all the *knappen*, was grooming Nibelung; three long-backed, long-legged, frightful swine were grubbing in a heap of refuse; four or five gaunt ferocious-looking dogs came bounding up to greet their comrade Festhold; and a great old long-bearded goat stood on the top of the mixen, looking much disposed to butt at any new comer. The Sorel family had brought cleanliness from Flanders, and Hausfrau Johanna was scrupulously dainty in all her appointments. Christina scarcely knew how she conveyed herself and her blue kirtle across the bemired stones to the next and still darker portal, under which a wide but rough ill-hewn stair ascended. The stables, in fact, occupied the lower floor of the main building, and not till these stairs had ascended above them, did they lead out into the castle hall. Here were voices—voices rude and harsh like those Christina had shrunk from in passing drinking booths. There was a long table, with rough men at arms lounging about, and staring rudely at her; and at the upper end, by a great open chimney, sat, half dozing, an elderly man,

more rugged in feature than his son; and yet, when he roused himself and spoke to Hugh, there was a shade more of breeding and less of clownishness in his voice and deportment, as if he had been less entirely devoid of training. A tall darkly-robed woman stood beside him—it was her harsh tone of reproof and command that had so startled Christina as she entered—and her huge towering cap made her look gigantic in the dim light of the smoky hall. Her features had been handsome, but had become hardened into a grim wooden aspect; and with sinking spirits Christina paused at the step of the dais, and made her reverence, wishing she could sink beneath the stones of the pavement out of sight of these terrible personages.

"So that's the wench you have taken all this trouble for," was Freiherrinn Kunigunde's greeting. "She looks like another sick baby to nurse; but I'll have no trouble about;—that is all. Take her up to Ermentrude; and thou, girl, have a care thou dost her will, and puttest none of thy city fancies into her head."

"And hark thee, girl," added the old Freiherr, sitting up. "So thou canst nurse her well, thou shalt have a new gown and a stout husband."

"That way," pointed the lady towards one of the four corner towers; and Christina moved doubtfully towards it, reluctant to quit her father, her only protector, and afraid to introduce herself. The younger Freiherr, however, stepped before her, went striding two or three steps at a time up the turret stair, and, before Christina had wound her way up she heard a thin, impatient voice say, "Thou saidst she was come, Ebbo."

"Yes, even so," she heard Freiherr Eberhard return; "but she is slow and townbred. She was afraid of crossing the moat." And then both laughed, so that Christina's cheeks tingled as she emerged from the turret into another vaulted room. "Here she is," quoth the brother; "now will she make thee quite well."

It was a very bare and desolate room, with no hangings to the rough stone

walls, and scarcely any furniture, except a great carved bedstead, one wooden chair, a table, and some stools. On the bare floor, in front of the fire, her arm under her head, and a profusion of long hair falling round her like flax from a distaff, lay wearily a little figure, beside whom Sir Eberhard was kneeling on one knee.

"Here is my sisterling," said he, looking up to the new-comer. "They say you burgherwomen have ways of healing the sick. Look at her. Think you you can heal her?"

In an excess of dumb shyness Ermentrude half rose, and effectually hindered any observations on her looks by hiding her face away upon her brother's knee. It was the gesture of a child of five years old, but Ermentrude's length of limb forbade Christina to suppose her less than fourteen or fifteen. "What, wilt not look at her?" he said, trying to raise her head; and then, holding out one of her wasted, feverish hands to Christina, he again asked, with a wistfulness that had a strange effect from the large, tall man, almost ten years her elder, "Canst thou cure her, maiden?"

"I am no doctor, sir," replied Christina; "but I could, at least, make her more comfortable. The stone is too hard for her."

"I will not go away; I want the fire," murmured the sick girl, holding out her hand towards it, and shivering.

Christina quickly took off her own thick cloth mantle, well lined with dressed lambskins, laid it on the floor, rolled the collar of it over a small log of wood—the only substitute she could see for a pillow—and showed an inviting couch in an instant. Ermentrude let her brother lay her down, and then was covered with the ample fold. She smiled as she turned up her thin, wasted face, faded into the same whitey-brown tint as her hair. "That is good," she said, but without thanks; and, feeling the soft lambswool: "is that what you burgherwomen wear? Father is to give me a furred mantle if only some court dame would pass the Debateable Ford. But the Schlangenwalds got the

last before ever we could get down. Jobst was so stupid. He did not give us warning in time, but he is to be hung next time if he does not."

Christina's blood curdled as she heard this speech in a weak little complaining tone, that otherwise put her sadly in mind of Barbara Schmidt's little sister, who had pined and wasted to death. "Never mind, Frudchen," answered the brother kindly; "mean-time I have kept all the wild catskins for thee, and may be this—this—*she* could sew them up into a mantle for thee."

"O let me see," cried the young lady eagerly; and Sir Eberhard, walking off, presently returned with an armful of the beautiful brindled furs of the mountain cat, reminding Christina of her aunt's gentle domestic favourite. Ermentrude sat up, and regarded the placing out of them with great interest; and thus her brother left her employed, and so much delighted that she had not flagged, when a great bell proclaimed that it was the time for the noontide meal, for which Christina, in spite of all her fears of the company below stairs, had been constrained by mountain air to look forward with satisfaction.

Ermentrude, she found, meant to go down, but with no notion of the personal arrangements that Christina had been wont to think a needful preliminary. With all her hair streaming, down she went, and was so gladly welcomed by her father that it was plain that her presence was regarded as an unusual advance towards recovery, and Christina feared lest he might already be looking out for the stout husband. She had much to tell him about the catskin cloak, and then she was seized with eager curiosity at the sight of Christina's bundles, and especially at her lute, which she must hear at once.

"Not now," said her mother, "there will be jingling and jingling enough by and by—meat now."

The whole establishment were taking their places—or rather tumbling into them. A battered, shapeless metal vessel seemed to represent the salt, and

next to it Hugh Sorel seated himself, and kept a place for her beside him. Otherwise she would hardly have had seat or food. She was now able to survey the inmates of the castle. Besides the family themselves, there were about a dozen men, all ruffianly-looking, and of much lower grade than her father, and three women. One, old Ursel, the wife of Hatto the forester, was a bent, worn, but not ill-looking woman, with a motherly face; the younger ones were hard, bold creatures, from whom Christina felt a shrinking recoil. The meal was dressed by Ursel and her kitchen boy. From a great cauldron, goat's flesh and broth together was ladled out into wooden bowls. That every one provided their own spoon and knife—no fork—was only what Christina was used to in the most refined society, and she had the implements in a pouch hanging to her girdle; but she was not prepared for the unwashed condition of the bowls, nor for being obliged to share that of her father—far less for the absence of all blessing on the meal, and the coarse-boisterousness of manners prevailing thereat. Hungry as she was, she did not find it easy to take food under these circumstances, and she was relieved when Ermentrude was overcome by the turmoil, grew giddy, and was carried upstairs by her father, who laid her down upon her great bed, and left her to the attendance of Christina. Ursel had followed, but was petulantly repulsed by her young lady in favour of the new-comer, and went away grumbling.

Nestled on her bed, Ermentrude insisted on hearing the lute, and Christina had to creep down to fetch it, with some other of her goods, in trembling haste, and redoubled disgust at the aspect of the meal, which looked even more repulsive in this later stage, and to one who was no longer partaking of it.

Low and softly, with a voice whence she could scarcely banish tears, and in dread of attracting attention, Christina sung to the sick girl, who listened with a sort of rude wonder, and finally was lulled to sleep. Christina ventured to lay down her instrument and move

towards the window, heavily mullioned with stone, barred with iron, and glazed with thick glass; being in fact the only glazed window in the castle. To her great satisfaction it did not look out over the loathsome court, but over the opening of the ravine. The apartment occupied the whole floor of the keep; it was stone-paved, but the roof was boarded, and there was a round turret at each angle. One contained the staircase, and was that which ran up above the keep, served as a watch-tower, and supported the Eagle banner. The other three were empty, and one of these, which had a strong door, and a long loophole window looking out over the open country, Christina hoped that she might appropriate. The turret was immediately over the perpendicular cliff that descended into the plain. A stone thrown from the window would have gone straight down, she knew not where. Close to her ears rushed the descending waterfall in its leap over the rock side, and her eyes could rest themselves on the green meadow land below, and the smooth water of the Debateable Ford; nay—far, far away beyond retreating ridges of wood and field, she thought she could track a silver line, and guided by it, a something that might be a city. Her heart leapt towards it, but she was recalled by Ermentrude's fretfully impatient voice.

"I was only looking forth from the window, lady," she said, returning.

"Ah! Thou saw'st no travellers at the Ford?" cried Ermentrude, starting up with lively interest.

"No, lady; I was gazing at the far distance. Know you if it be indeed Ulm that we see from these windows?"

"Ulm? That is where thou comest from?" said Ermentrude languidly.

"My happy home, with my dear uncle and aunt! O, if I can but see it hence, it will be joy!"

"I do not know. Let me see," said Ermentrude, rising; but at the window her pale blue eyes gazed vacantly as if she did not know what she was looking at or for.

"Ah! if the steeple of the Dome

Kirk were but finished, I could not mistake it," said Christina. "How beauteous the white spire will look from hence!"

"Dome Kirk?" repeated Ermentrude; "what is that?"

Such an entire blank as the poor child's mind seemed to be was inconceivable to the maiden, who had been bred up amid the busy hum of men, where the constant resort of strange merchants, the daily interests of a self-governing municipality, and the numerous festivals, both secular and religious, were an unconscious education, even without that which had been bestowed upon her by teachers, as well as by her companionship with her uncle, and participation in his studies, taste, and arts.

Ermentrude von Adlerstein had, on the contrary, not only never gone beyond the Kohler's hut on the one side, and the mountain village on the other, but she had never seen more of life than the festival at the wake at the hermitage chapel there on Midsummer-day. The only strangers who ever came to the castle were disbanded Lanzknechts who took service with her father, or now and then a captive whom he put to ransom. She knew absolutely nothing of the world, except for a general belief that *Freiherren* lived there to do what they chose with other people, and that the house of Adlerstein was the freest and noblest in existence. Also there was a very positive hatred to the House of Schlangenwald, and no less to that of Adlerstein Wildschloss, for no reason that Christina could discover save that, being a younger branch of the family, they had submitted to the Emperor. To destroy either the Graf von Schlangenwald, or her Wildschloss cousin, was evidently the highest gratification Ermentrude could conceive; and, for the rest, that her father and brother should make successful captures at the Debateable Ford was the more abiding, because more practical hope. She had no further ideas, except perhaps to elude her mother's severity, and to desire her brother's success in *chamois-hunting*.

The only mental culture she had ever received was that old Ursel had taught her the Credo, Pater Noster, and Ave as correctly as might be expected from a long course of traditionary repetitions of an incomprehensible language. And she knew besides a few German rhymes and jingles, half Christian, half heathen, with a legend or two which, if the names were Christian, ran grossly wild from all Christian meaning or morality. As to the amenities, nay, almost the proprieties, of life, they were less known in that baronial castle than in any artisan's house at Ulm. So little had the sick girl figured them to herself, that she did not even desire any greater means of ease than she possessed. She moaned and fretted indeed with aching limbs and blank weariness, but without the slightest formed desire for anything to remove her discomfort, except the few ameliorations she knew, such as sitting on her brother's knee, with her head on his shoulder, or tasting the mountain berries that he gathered for her. Any other desire she exerted herself to frame was for finery to be gained from the spoils of travellers.

And this was Christina's charge, whom she must look upon as the least alien spirit in this dreadful castle of banishment! The young and old lords seemed to her savage bandits, who frightened her only less than did the proud sinister expression of the old lady, who had not even the merit of showing any tenderness towards the sickly girl, of whom she was ashamed, and evidently regarded the town-bred attendant as a contemptible interloper.

Long, long did the maiden weep and

pray that night after Ermentrude had sunk to sleep. She strained her eyes with home-sick longings to detect lights where she thought Ulm might be; and, as she thought of her uncle and aunt, the poodle and the cat round the stove, the maids spinning, and the prentices knitting as her uncle read aloud some grave good book, most probably the legend of the saint of the day, and contrasted it with the rude gruff sounds of revelry that found their way up the turret stairs, she could hardly restrain her sobs from awakening the young lady whose bed she was to share. She thought almost with envy of her own patroness, who was cast into the lake of Bolsana with a millstone about her neck—a better fate, thought she, than to live on in such an abode of loathsomeness and peril.

But then had not St. Christina floated up alive, bearing up her millstone with her? And had not she been put into a dungeon full of venomous reptiles who, when they approached her, had all been changed to harmless doves? Christina had once asked Father Balthazar how this could be; and had he not replied that the Church did not teach the miracle as a matter of faith, but that she might there discern in figure how meek Christian holiness rose above all crushing burthens, and transformed the rudest natures? This poor maiden—dying, perhaps; and oh! how unfit to live or die!—might it be her part to do some good work by her, and infuse some Christian hope, some godly fear? Could it be for this that the saints had led her hither?

*To be continued.*



## A TRIP TO THE ISTHMUS OF SUEZ.

BY SIR ALEXANDER DUFF-GORDON.

THE progress of the works at the Isthmus of Suez is so little known in England—and, we will add, even in France—that an account of a trip made under the most advantageous circumstances may be interesting. We will forego all speculations as to the commercial advantages or political dangers which may arise from the success or failure of the Suez Canal, and confine ourselves to a bare narrative of facts.

On the 6th December a party, consisting of M. Lesseps, several of the directors, engineers, and chief employés of the company, and a few of M. Lesseps's private friends, left Alexandria by rail for Benha, a station near Cairo, whence there is a branch line to Zag-a-zick, an Arab village, where heaps of rubbish mark the site of the ancient Bubastis. There are as yet no houses—nothing save a few Arab huts; and the employés of the Suez Canal live in tents; but this place is already famous for its Sunday market, and it will eventually become a very considerable town. At Zag-a-zick the fresh-water canal commences. The viceroy means himself shortly to make a canal from Cairo to join the canal at Zag-a-zick.

At Zag-a-zick the whole party, consisting of about twenty persons, embarked in two canal boats drawn by camels. The first day's journey was to Tell-el-Kebir, a fine property, bought, some years ago, from Mehemet Ali by the Suez Canal Company: it runs some way along the canal of *eau douce*, and consists of about forty-five Arab villages, and is famous for its cotton, supposed to be the best in Egypt. The manager of this large district is M. Guichard, a man admirably suited for his work, being not only a good agriculturist, but—what tells among the Bedouins of the desert, which surrounds his property—

an excellent shot and a first-rate bold rider.

His hospitality was sorely taxed by the inroad of about twenty very hungry people at ten o'clock at night. But the pleasant ways of Madame Guichard, a Parisian suddenly transplanted into the heart of the desert, did away with all difficulties, and those for whom there were not beds made themselves very comfortable with arm-chairs, and divans, and plenty of cigars. The house at Tell-el-Kebir was a palace of Mehemet Ali's. The canal thus far is, we believe, an ancient one, dating from the time of the Pharaohs; it was restored by Mehemet Ali for the sake of his property, and has been deepened and improved by the Suez Canal Company. The property is now valued at above £500,000. Wherever the Nile can be brought fruitfulness follows; in three or four years what was a sandy desert becomes a cotton-field, or a sugar-plantation, or teems with vegetables, and the Bedouins lay aside the sword and the long gun, and take to being cultivators of the soil. It tells well for M. Guichard that in his district, although there is an Arab *cadi* or magistrate, the Arabs prefer coming to the Frenchman to settle all their quarrels. The distance from Zag-a-zick to Tell-el-Kebir is thirty-five kilometres; it took about eight hours, as camels are not the best beasts of draught.

The next day's journey, from Tell-el-Kebir to Ismailia, on Lake Timsch, is sixty kilometres. On the left it is nearly all desert, but on its right for some distance the Tell-el-Kebir property runs along the canal. About half way to Ismailia this canal passes an Arab village, where two statues mark the spot of the ancient Rameses. This district, now partially recovered from

the desert, was the ancient land of Goshen.

The town of Ismailia is a comfortable French settlement, with several thousand inhabitants, a good inn, and some handsome houses, and stands on a gently rising ground, falling down to Lake Timseh (the Lake of the Crocodiles), now a bitter salt lake. This station is destined to be the future inland port of the Suez Canal, being about half-way on the direct maritime canal between Port Said on the Mediterranean and Suez on the Red Sea.

Only two—at most, three years ago—when M. Lesseps went to Ismailia with two other persons, his caravan consisted of about forty camels to carry his tent, a few provisions, and water; now you are as comfortable at Ismailia as in most provincial towns in France. Not only did we sit down, about thirty, to a most excellent dinner, but we attended mass in the morning and witnessed a marriage, and went to a ball in the evening. At Ismailia there is a very huge force-pump, which supplies with Nile water the district along the sea-water canal to Port Said. Ismailia is named not only after Ismail Pacha, the late viceroy, but after Ishmael, as, according to Arab tradition, it was here that Hagar and her son were turned out to perish in the wilderness.

The salt-water canal begins near Lake Timseh, and the worst part of the excavation is at the *Seuil de Gisir*, where there is a very heavy and long cutting through an elevation, partly sand and partly rock. The French have, however, erected a very large and powerful dredge, worked by steam power, which cuts away the sand and fills trucks, which are conveyed by railroad some distance along the canal, and emptied on to its banks where wanted. This machine fills a railway truck with sand in two minutes, and does the work of about 40,000 men.

At El-Gisir the party breakfasted at the house of the head-engineer of the works. In the midst of the desert he has a garden so well watered that snipe come frequently, and fall a prey to some cats kept for other purposes. After

breakfast we saw the engine perform its work, and then went in a tender lined with matting along the line, to see the sand emptied out. The canal of sea-water is still very shallow, and not half its width; and the voyage was diversified by our having to get out occasionally to lighten the boat when it stuck, and by various vagaries on the part of the camels which drew us. The distance of our first sea voyage on the Suez Canal, from Ismailia to Cantara (the bridge) is thirty-five kilometres. We reached Cantara, which is the place where the Syrian caravans to and from Egypt stop and water, at eight at night. To show the importance of this station, we will give a list of the traffic going through it. During the month of November, there passed the bridge at Cantara 7,260 camels, 1,392 horses, 362 mules, 775 donkeys, 1,189 cattle, 3,408 sheep, and 849 goats, going from Syria into Egypt; and about one half of the quantity of the same beasts went from Egypt into Syria. At Cantara we visited the hospital, which is clean, and paid a visit to the Greek doctor, who is married to an Englishwoman. Near Cantara there is admirable shooting; gazelles and wild boars abound; but you must go some ten or twelve miles, to a belt of wood, in search of them.

From Cantara we started early, and went to Raz-el-Aich, where the canal has assumed its proper dimensions—fifty-eight metres wide. From Raz-el-Aich to Port Said we went in a small steamer. Part of this day's journey was through the Lake Menzaleh, and it is here that the chief difficulties are to be apprehended. The liquid mud at the bottom of the lake will make the deepening of the canal to its proper depth of eight metres or twenty-seven feet, and keeping it at that uniform depth, a matter of great difficulty. The French will soon, however, have about sixty-five large powerful dredges at work; which will do the work hitherto done by forced labour, or free labour, difficult to obtain. When the barges are filled with the liquid mud, they are towed to the side of the canal, where powerful cranes take up the trucks full of mud out of the barges, and empty

their contents on the bank. These powerful cranes have also an ingenious contrivance attached to them, by which they convey their own railroads along the bank.

The voyage through the Lake Menzaleh is interesting, from the constant mirage, and the enormous flocks of flamingoes and pelicans, snipe and wild duck. The flamingoes, standing by thousands in the shallow water, look like rosy-coloured islands in the distance; and in their flight they present now a white surface, and occasionally, as they wheel, a rosy surface, to the sun's rays.

The proportions of the canal when finished will be 58 metres wide at the top and 22 metres wide at the bottom; the depth is to be 8 metres, or about 27 feet. The company hope in a couple of years to open it with a depth of 5 metres all the way from Port Said to Suez.

The distance from Ismailia to Port Said on the Mediterranean is 85 kilometres. Port Said is entirely a new creation. Two or three years ago, when M. Lesseps first went to the spot, it consisted of a narrow strip of sand dividing Lake Menzaleh from the Mediterranean. His companions scraped up some sand from the sea-beach and spread it over the black mud left by the lake—there his tent was pitched. Now Port Said has nearly 4,500 Europeans; and about 1,500 Arabs live in an Arab village adjoining. It boasts a *cercle*, a Catholic and a Greek church, and an Arab mosque; there is a *Bazaar universal*, together with some very good lodgings on the *Quai Eugénie*, and it is altogether a thriving town. A pier which is to be 1,500 metres in length is partly built; the chief use of it at present seems, to be as a fishing station for all the young Greeks and vagabonds of the place. Every minute these young rascals pulled out fish varying from two to four pounds in weight; and, when it blows hard, the fish—a sort of coarse grey mullet—are thrown on the sands and caught by the hand.

Port Said is the workshop for all the Isthmus of Suez material. Large blocks

of sand and cement are there prepared for the future pier, and steam engines, worked by French, Greeks, and Arabs, prepare all the rough material, and put together the iron tanks, barges, and machinery sent from Marseilles and elsewhere. The Greeks are said to work well at any labour requiring change. They will fill tanks and barges, and then convey them to the bank, and they work at the dredges and cranes; but the Arabs are the best at dull, continuous, and monotonous work.

At Port Said, Osman Pacha, the envoy sent from Constantinople to arrange the land question with the Isthmus of Suez Canal Company, joined the party, with his suite of secretaries, engineers, and two Circassian body guards, splendidly armed. He had come with tents, and meant to live with separate establishments; but such was the good reception given by the Company that he became M. Lesseps's guest, and his tents were sent to an encampment on the Bitter Lake, not far from Suez, where as yet no houses have been built.

The next day at Port Said was spent in visiting the works now in progress—among other places the water reservoir, which seems to have frightened some alarmists in this country, who magnified this round peaceful reservoir into a formidable fort.

The following day a forced voyage was made from Port Said to Ismailia, and the next day the whole party went on to Suez by the soft-water canal.

It has been the custom of late to regret the absence of French politeness. "*La politesse Française*" has taken refuge in Egypt, for it would be unpardonable not to mention the courtesy and kindness with which the only two Englishmen and the one Englishwoman of the party were treated, not only by M. Lesseps, but by all those employed on the Suez canal. Another thing that struck the strangers of the party was the zeal of the French engineers and other employés, and the love and interest they had for their work.

## A WORD MORE ON THE HISTORY OF CÆSAR, AND ON CERTAIN OTHER HISTORIES WRITTEN AND ACTED.

BY F. D. MAURICE.

SIR,—If I agree with you that Mr. Dicey has not said all which needs to be said about the "*Histoire de Jules César*," I rejoice that it has found so able an expositor and defender. One who thoroughly appreciates a book is most competent to tell us what it means. We can consider for ourselves how far the meaning satisfies us; if it explains the past to us; what light it throws upon our times. In this instance the devil's advocates will not be few; each one of us may be inclined to snatch at that office. To have the reasons fairly and skilfully presented to us, why a book, avowedly recommending the policy of the Napoleonic house—because that was the policy of the Cæsars—should take its place in the canonised literature of the world, is an advantage which we should not undervalue.

In one respect Mr. Dicey's treatment of the book seems to me fairer than that which it has received from its reviewers generally. Its worth as an explanation of Roman life is entirely subordinate, in his judgment, to its worth as an exhibition of the faith and purpose of the writer. Such criticism is, of course, open to cavils. It may be said that, on this showing,—

"Imperial Cæsar, dead and turned to clay,  
Just stops a hole to keep the wind away,"

when it is blowing with inconvenient vehemence from any quarter in the direction of the house of Bonaparte.

It may be said—it has been said with great effect—that the name of the man who, with all his vices, was full of genial sympathies and a noble cultivation, has been only adopted to conceal the real author of the imperial system, the real object of imperial admiration—the second triumvir, the

betrayed of Cicero. But these objections, however reasonable in themselves, do not affect Mr. Dicey's position. The theories of a man who has translated, or is translating them into facts, must be more important to us than any explanation of bygone events or characters can be. If they appear in the form of such an explanation, its value cannot depend merely or chiefly upon its correctness.

Another observation of Mr. Dicey concerns us even more than this. We call the book of the Emperor a fatalist book. Well, asks his able counsel, and are you not all fatalists? What signifies it that you ever and anon change the word fate or destiny for Providence, and spell that word with a capital letter? Does that make any real difference? Do you *mean* more than he means? A very profitable and severe examination this which your contributor has forced upon us—a very righteous admonition to beware of judging lest we should be judged.

Instead of protesting against this statement, I discover in it what may be a deliverance to us from much confusion and some hypocrisy. It is the topic on which I propose chiefly to dwell in this letter. Enough, perhaps, has been said as to the merits and demerits of a work which as yet we know only in its commencement. But the principle of it, which is set forth clearly in the preface, which is to be consistently and "logically" applied hereafter to the facts of the ancient and of the modern world, must always be occupying us in one form or another. If it is true, as Mr. Dicey says, that we adopt that principle habitually—if it is also true, as he says, that we grumble at it and protest

against it continually—these apparently opposite facts deserve investigation. I admit them both; I admit that our displeasure sometimes vents itself in railings which would be far less bitter and spiteful if we had not a secret consciousness that we were fighting with an enemy who had an ally in our own hearts. I wish as much as Mr. Dicey can that we should abstain from such railings. They hurt the Emperor little; they may hurt our sincerity and resolution very much.

I think, however, that Mr. Dicey has weakened his own argument, if he has not done us injustice, by one of his complaints. The First Napoleon, in the judgment of his nephew and of the world generally, embodied more perfectly the fatalist principle—as he was more thoroughly possessed by the fatalist belief—than any other man. We ought, therefore, being ourselves under the dominion of that principle and that belief, to regard him with greater respect than we pay to most other men. That, Mr. Dicey affirms, is the case with the people of the Continent generally, with Frenchmen almost universally. We, he affirms, are the exception. We cleave to the traditions of the Georgian era. *Punch* reproduces the obsolete jests of Gilray. That there was a revival of the feelings which prevailed in Great Britain during the first twenty years of this century at the time of the Coup d'Etat; that they were kindled afresh—after a suspension during the Crimean war—at the commencement of the Volunteer movement; that the Gilray spirit may return to our caricaturists when a book appears which identifies the policy of the Third Napoleon with that of the First, I do not deny. But I heard Mr. Emerson tell a London audience, what he had probably told a Boston audience before, that we of the middle class were all in our hearts worshippers of Napoleon, because he was on a large scale what we aspired to be on a small scale. I believe he spoke truly. He might have acquired his conviction in America. It might apply more directly to the then united democratic community, ambitious

of conquest, than to us. But our withers were not unwrung by those strong words. Very strong they were; for no doubt it was our class which had toasted the good old king and delighted in Gilray's portraits. Circumstances have occurred since Mr. Emerson spoke and wrote which may make us regard the golden image which he described to us with more shrinking, with less awe. But, if the sackbut and psaltery and all instruments should summon us to fall down before it, I ask myself how many of us would stand erect, whether any would accept a burning fiery furnace as the alternative.

Since I detect what appear to me the preludings to this various and magnificent music in the History of Cæsar, I am anxious to inquire what the service is to which it would invite us. When I turn for this purpose to the book, I at once recognise a genuine record of a "fatal" gravitation downwards in the people of Rome. The chapter on the Gracchi, on Marius, and Sylla exhibits very forcibly a growth of faction and selfishness among the aristocracy, efforts vigorous but impotent in democratic leaders to assert for the excluded classes a share in the privileges which were monopolized—the first participating in all the violence of those whom they would have described as leaders of the mob; the latter as ambitious and reckless, when their hour came, as the men whose conduct had justified their resistance. The picture may or may not be faithful in its costume and its details; the outline I suppose no one will deny to be correct. The inference is that which the whole book is occupied with. All this must go on till a man appears who understands his age, who sees the defects and partialities of his predecessors, and shuns them; who merges aristocracy and democracy in himself; who becomes the founder of an empire. Here is that irresistible "logic," to the rules of which we are taught, in the opening of the Preface, that all history must conform itself. The writer has evidently the deepest assurance that there can be no



departure from it. And can there be? Is not this law of fate the eternal unchangeable law? Before we answer let us revolve for one moment a perplexity which will strike most readers at some step or another of their historical studies. We see the downward destiny clearly enough; but the upward? Does the same fate bring about that continual declension which is exhibited with so much power, and the man of genius who sets all right? The Emperor has a righteous horror of referring great events to small causes; can he refer contrary events to the same cause?

When this doubt has been once started it gains strength from a passage in the Preface which no one could overlook, but which might have been read carelessly. It is this: "*Ce qui précède montre assez le but que je me propose en écrivant cette histoire. Ce but est de prouver que lorsque LA PROVIDENCE suscite des hommes tels que Cæsar, Charlemagne, Napoléon, c'est pour tracer aux peuples la voie qu'ils doivent suivre,*" &c. Of course, if such sentences occurred in any ordinary writer, we should merely say, with Mr. Dicey, "Providence, in spite of the article and the capital, is only another word for fate." And, though this is a classical passage—though it must have been written with great care, seeing it is to declare the very purpose of the book—though a writer whose aim is to be logical ought to be unusually careful in the choice of his expressions—we might, nevertheless, allow for a good-natured concession to the prejudices of the times, for a harmless conciliation of the *parti prêtre*, and think no more of the poor phrase. But we see that it is not the logic of expressions, but the logic of facts, which is in question. There are two different—two opposite—sets of facts to be accounted for. The rigid logician seems to hint that it may be needful to call in a new agent to solve one set of them. I do not believe that he intends it, but we have a right to know how the difficulty is avoided.

And it is not the only one. The fatal process of declension we have no doubt

of. "That the age of the parents—worse than that of the grandfathers—bore descendants more evil than they, who were soon to send forth a more degraded offspring"—this great dogma of one who witnessed the commencement of the Empire is illustrated for us in the story of the Republic. But *whence* was the decline? Where was the *good* of which this state of things was the corruption? Here we are at fault. The author of the "History" assumes the old story of the kings. Be it so; on critical grounds I have no objection. But, when he tells me of the institutions of Numa, I find just as much of a deliberate scheme to make a religion which shall uphold a polity already made—just as deliberate contrivances to produce certain impressions about the invisible world, for the sake of accomplishing certain results in the visible world—as I could impute to the augurs in the days of Cicero, who could not look each other in the face without laughing. All from beginning to end is a scheme—a scheme, no doubt, in which fate had its hand, as well as the man of genius. But it was a lie, and what portion of the lie was contributed by fate, what by the man of genius, does not seem to me of much consequence. I want to know where the degeneracy could be from such a stock as this? An ever-growing development of falsehood there might be; but to talk of the primitive virtues disappearing—of gold, or conquest, or Greek scepticism impairing the nobleness of a people whose institutions and whose belief had this root—is not logic, but a sheer outrage upon sense.

What follows? Our fatalist historian, being very skilful in tracing the cause of decay in a nation, but being utterly unable to discover the good of the nation which is implied in its decay, and therefore to explain how that good may be restored, is compelled to assume as his highest ideal a man who, being raised above the level of his contemporaries, gathers into himself all their habits and tempers, and so is recognised as the leader before whom they must bow.

He may trample upon them, but he is what they desire to be. He can do the things which they count most worthy to be done. I am far, indeed, from dismissing this as a mere imperial theory. I have already confessed that I feel it to have the weightiest justification in experience. But it is an experience in which I do not think that it is safe to acquiesce, and I look anxiously about to see whether I can find any way of escaping from it.

I do not know one eminent and earnest thinker of our time who has not occupied himself, more or less steadfastly, with this problem. To begin with the immediate subject of this history. There are some, perhaps, who will contrast the faith of the Emperor, accepting so cheerfully the old stories of Livy, with the scepticism of Niebuhr. But the scepticism of the one had, it seems to me, a very firm ground of faith; the faith of the other involves an infinite scepticism. Niebuhr, brought up in an age of revolutions, having experienced the most grinding despotism that ever punished the sins and crushed the energies of a free nation, strengthening his profound scholarship by converse with actual affairs, had acquired a sense of the sacredness of institutions—as representing not the feelings of a man, not the temper of an age, but the very meaning of a nation's existence—which might sometimes degenerate into a superstition, which he could not realize amidst the confusions of potentates and diplomatists, but which embodied itself in his Roman studies, and enabled him to discover in the dry fossils which were submitted to his experiments the signs of a once vigorous life. It was no slight assistance, I conceive, to his inquiries, that he cultivated himself all the household virtues, the loss of which, as the later Romans believed, had so much to do with the decay of their city. He knew that there were relations which man did not create, in which it was his blessing to find himself. He knew that those into which he did enter of his own will had a binding force which

he could not set aside but at his own grievous loss. He carried about with him therefore the belief of an order, the sense of being subject to one. The Roman faith which recognised this order seemed to him in its root and principle a sincere one. All departures from sincerity, all resort to lies, called forth his indignation. He could then understand degeneracy. The selfishness of the aristocracy was to him a violation of the principles of an aristocracy which should uphold the sacredness of the family, which should be a witness for the permanence of the nation; though he might perceive how the desire to fulfil these duties might betray some good men into the vices which were besetting their order. He could see the immense blessings which had come from the conflicts of Orders, and the horrors which must ensue when they passed into the conflicts of factious leaders. When these had reached their height in the civil wars he might have allowed that the rule of an accomplished and refined Dictator was an escape from worse evils; he might have protested against the act of Brutus as a certain precursor of heavier tyranny. But the notion that the advent of the empire was itself a blessing would have been, I apprehend, for him the most monstrous and the most hateful of paradoxes.

Here then is one form of direct antagonism to the new history. The antagonism, I must repeat it, is not between the critical conclusions of Niebuhr and those of the Emperor, except in so far as the conclusions of the one arose from his belief that the constitution of a nation is a reality which reveals itself through the different stages of its growth, and the conclusions of the other from the belief that it must be referred to some human contrivance. Thirty or forty years ago young men in England who had been much possessed by Benthamite opinions were led into a new track of thought by Niebuhr. They had the glimpse of a science of history; what they had failed to learn from Burke about their own nation seemed brought back to them by the researches of a

foreigner respecting the Old World. But Niebuhr evidently found all his treasures in the past; he had no hope for the future. He could not bear the shock of the second French Revolution; how then can he be an adequate instructor for us who have had two more to pass through? He is regarded, I suppose, by those who have grown up in our age, merely as a writer whose studies have had a certain effect on our treatment of documents; or as one who constructed a Roman history which they have the privilege of disbelieving like that which it superseded. And yet there are those who have to thank him for strengthening them in the belief that the order of a nation is a divine order, which monarchs did not give, and which they cannot take away.

So far as that belief has anything to do with thoughts about a national constitution, no one might seem more indifferent to it, or to have shaken it more, than Mr. Carlyle. And, since no one speaks more than he does about "the Eternal Destinies," or less resorts to any conventional phrases about Providence for the sake of making that language look respectable, it is not an uncommon opinion that his histories are "fatal" in the same sense as the "History of Julius Cæsar" is fatal. The strong, manly man, too, mingles so much with these dim recognitions of something to which he does homage, that we might easily fancy Mr. Carlyle assigned him just the same part which those champions of humanity play whom "*la Providence suscite*," and whom the people are to follow. If bitter mortification and chagrin at some of Mr. Carlyle's later utterances could justify any one in accepting this opinion, I should fall into it readily. But his latest work convinces me as much as those which I honour most, that the comparison is a superficial and false one, that radically he is at war with the fatalism of the Emperor as much as with his whole conception of a hero's calling and a hero's work. The life of Friedrich is a more crucial test of the difference than any book which he has written. Mr.

Carlyle has exhibited at full length, in the most careful detail, what we all in our boyhood supposed Friedrich to be, a man battling with circumstances and not overwhelmed by them. This, the original conception of the heroic character, is shown to have been possible amidst all the complications and mechanical contrivances of the eighteenth century. The art of the book, it strikes me, is not less remarkable than its industry, prodigious as that must have been. The Homeric phrases—which appear curiously out of place in the midst of the most careful details of modern warfare, when thrift and preparation of means are magnified as the highest of virtues—express the very meaning of the author, and produce the impression which he intends to produce. Prussians against Austrians are Greeks using their wit and science and steady purpose to overthrow the stupid Asiatics, whom the gods are inclined to patronize. Destiny, then, is surely defied rather than glorified by Friedrich. Again, in Mr. Carlyle's picture he is distinctly the national king, the king of a small nation. The *Reich* is his enemy. To abolish that is, though he does not clearly know it, his work. And it is only with a nation he can have sympathy. Much as Mr. Carlyle abhors all parliamentary government and discourse, he finds that Chatham—the great Commoner, the parliamentary orator—is the one man who can understand his hero because he understands the national interests of England, and cares more for Jenkins's ear than for all the Continental projects of his master. It is pleasant to see this illustrious writer swallowing, not without evident symptoms of disgust and threats of indigestion, his own formulas. It is often painful to see him lashing himself into admiration of his hero, and forcing his reader into the same difficult attitude of mind. Yet here, too, is a struggle with difficulties; the author, like his subject, is a wrestler with fate. That he perpetually denounces all those phantasms, platitudes, incoherences, which each age inherits from its prede-

cessor, adding to the stock which it receives, I need not tell any one; that he looks upon the kingly man as existing not to organize them and make them enduring, but to clear the air of them, is obvious in every page. How, then, can his dogmas resemble the Napoleonic dogmas?

But the counteraction of these dogmas; can we look to him for that? Will the reverence for heroes, or the faint expectation of one, do more than the faith in Constitutions to withstand the advance of that imperial fatalism, which has such evident attractions even for some of the best minds amongst us? I have no dream that it will. Friedrich cannot encounter the Reich of the nineteenth century. Let him have been all that Mr. Carlyle says that he was, what did he bequeath to Prussia which did not stoop to the man whom the world of 1807 worshipped, whose likeness we are asked to worship in 1865? Mr. Carlyle once gave us a history which finished with the advent of that man. It was not properly a heroic history. Those few heroes who crossed the stage vanished rapidly; we did not always know whether the clear and vivid impression which they left upon us while they stayed was a true one. It was a book of destiny. About the truth of it *as such* we could have no doubt. We saw the crimes of the priests, kings, and nobles of France culminating in a terrific judgment; that was described to us as no Greek dramatist could have described it. For we were reminded often by phrases which a Greek dramatist could scarcely have used, though he might have anticipated them, that the word "Judgment" was a more appropriate one than Destiny; that a righteous Judge was really coming forth to demand of men what they had done with the trusts which were committed to them. All fine philosophical language about sequences of events and circumstances was thrown aside by the stern writer of the Revolutionary Epos; often it was dismissed with grim laughter. The old Hebrew phraseology was restored in the nineteenth century. It did not

therefore concern us much if a young Officer of Artillery appeared at the last moment to put down an insurrection, and if a hint were given that there might be many a Marius in that Cæsar. We had learnt that Officers of Artillery, Mariuses, and Cæsars might have their parts to play in the great drama, sometimes principal, sometimes subordinate parts; that each would have his exits and his entrances; but that they would not determine the catastrophe. It would be determined, so Mr. Carlyle often spoke, by "the Eternal Destinies." He sought to avoid cant by that language; the desire was an honourable and a reverent one, though it has often been the excuse for much cant in him and in others.

And, when he next appeared as an historian, that dread had to be thrown aside. Cromwell could not be made to fashion his lips to the new kind of speech. The Kingdom of God in his letters and in his acts could not be translated into any more creditable expression. Mr. Carlyle did not discover any, or wish for any. He revelled in the old Puritan's discourse. He evidently found it more natural to him than any which he had acquired in later days. He accepted it in all its fierceness, all its exclusiveness. One sometimes fears that he has retained the fierceness and exclusiveness, and has let go the substance which made them tolerable, almost beautiful. I will not believe it. I owe Mr. Carlyle too much for teaching me, in spite of much morbid weakness, to see the grandeur and veracity of that substance, and to wish only for deliverance from the accidents which narrow and enfeeble it, ever to endure the thought that he loves the husk, and has thrown away the kernel. Hereafter perhaps he may find, we may all find, that the Emperor has not the slightest dislike to denunciations of parliamentary palaver, to admiration of heroic kings who overturned giants of another generation—above all, to talk about the destinies—but that there is a perplexing and an alarming sound in the old message about a righteous Judge of

Nations, a King of Kings, to which, on the whole, he would rather not listen.

That message has reached us strangely enough within the last two months from a voice which will inspire more respect, I should imagine, in Mr. Dicey than in Mr. Carlyle—from one of the makers, not the writers, of history; the American President, Abraham Lincoln. Though no democrat, having much respect for kings not merely in Mr. Carlyle's sense, but as the representatives of old houses and venerable traditions, I have yet felt the inauguration speech of the Illinois attorney to be one of the most memorable and the most sublime which have been heard in this generation. Whatever the biographer of Cromwell may say, it is just the kind of explanation which Cromwell, in his most honest, straightforward moments, would have given of the civil war of his own time, just the way in which he would have contemplated the trial of battle. With a keener sword than Mr. Carlyle's, it cuts through mere constitutional fictions, through the mere palaver in which Americans are wont to indulge; it brings the whole land and every man in it face to face with the awful facts of their position. There is no effort to disguise these facts in rhetorical rhodomontade, no appeal to the destinies to set any federal statesman or soldier free from his own personal responsibility. I do not indeed find in Mr. Lincoln's sermon, more than in those of the 17th century, much indication of any power which can unite or reconcile the nations. A Lord of Hosts, a great Avenger of wrong-doing, is all that he or they set before us. But how much is this better than the pretty tolerant sayings, the amiable weaknesses in which we indulge, who are at ease and fancy we shall always be so! How much more invigorating it would be to men and nations if they could be nourished on such diet, even if it awakened a hunger for some that was less tough and more juicy! If our statesmen would now and then think Mr. Lincoln's thoughts—though they might wisely abstain from speaking his words—they would do acts which would cheer down-

trodden peoples, and would make their patrons as well as their oppressors ashamed.

That remark brings me back to Europe, and to a country of it with which Mr. Dicey has sympathized not less than with Abraham Lincoln and his Federals. What malice led him to suggest to us, and to the Italians, that terrible parallel of Quintus Flaminius and his dealings with the Greek republics? He himself has forced us to think of it, and he says he is interpreting the mind of the Emperor in doing so. What more could Mazzini say? What note of warning could he give which Mr. Dicey has not given? That is the apology for Villa Franca; that is the sign of what is to come hereafter! I am thankful for the hint on other grounds, and because it gives me an excuse for braving the displeasure of many of your readers, and of many respectable persons, by avowing that Mazzini, like Abraham Lincoln, has spoken words which awaken echoes in my conscience, as I think they have awakened echoes in the conscience of his own country. His favourite phrase, "God and the people"—whatever interpretation he may have sometimes given it, either in speech or in act, which may seem to me feeble and dangerous (I put the two adjectives together, for I hold that what is really strong is not dangerous)—has a power in it which I do not think lies in any diplomacies, or in any conspiracies, or in any foreign war for the sake of an idea. It has the old Savonarola ring. Better than President Lincoln's Puritanism, it speaks of a Deliverer and Restorer, not only of an Avenger. It is what Italians must want especially—what must be almost new to them—would that it had not become grievously old to us!—the announcement of a righteous Being, of One who calls upon them to rise out of the dust, to believe, and to be men. I do not know Signor Mazzini, but I cannot help thinking that he means this. It seems to me that he is very weary of the fatalism of doctrinaires, as well as of emperors; that he does not suppose any people can be free unless they will to



be free; that he does suppose God can give them the will. I may be mistaken in imputing such notions to him—I hope I am not; and, if not, though I may not share his Republicanism, I must consider it much healthier and more godly than much of our Conservatism and Liberalism.

Having ventured so far in the parsonic line, I intend to go a step further. I cannot forget by what power Mazzini is confronted in his dreams of Italian reformation, by what power the author of the "Life of Cæsar" is confronted when he aspires to—to accomplish a rather different scheme of reformation. Each of them looks somewhat aghast as he approaches it, feeble as its present appearances may be. A fatherhood over Europe, which has lasted at least twelve centuries in the old capital of the world—is not that something to make any one pause and wonder? If it says to the nation of Italy, "Thou shalt not be free; thou art my bondsman; I will hold thee fast," a patriot may be very indignant. He may ask, What are these silken gossamer cords that we cannot tear them in pieces? But cords they are, of whatever stuff they are made. And the Pope speaks as the fair witch spoke to him who had come to spoil the magicians—

"He must be  
A stronger than thee  
Who shall break these threads of mine."

To the Emperor with his legions, who actually keeps this power alive, the defiance is still more mysterious. But it is still more mighty. "Thou reignest, thou sayest, by Destiny. And do not I reign by Destiny? Thy destiny has lasted not quite as many years as mine has lasted centuries. Did not thy uncle say that the Popedom was so good a conception that it would have been worth his while to establish it if it had not existed? Dost thou think thou canst extinguish what he would have been glad to create?" It is clear that the Cæsar has no answer to these remonstrances. He does not despair of making this strange power subject to

his. He remembers that Augustus was Pontifex Maximus. He has a strong conviction that all religions exist to keep society together. He sees nothing in the proceedings of those who administer this religion to make him doubt that they share his opinion. If he can only come to an understanding with them, if he can only convince them that society means an imperial system—that a Papal system may flourish best and exercise most power in harmony with it, in practical obedience to it—all may yet be well. In the meantime there is a difficulty. Events must not be hurried; let us wait.

Whilst these powers are considering their relations to each other, might not the foe of the magicians be considering if he has no spell which might unbind his hands, and enable him to fulfil his task? I think undoubtedly that the spell is hidden in the words which I have quoted. If the Italian people believes in God, it will be a free people; all the mischief which the authority of any priests or any emperor can do them is this, that they undermine that belief, and substitute for it the acknowledgment of visible power. But, if such a visible power, having its throne in Italy, has claimed dominion over mankind, there can be no private emancipation for that one land—there must be some way in which the yoke may be broken for all lands. It will not be broken till we ask ourselves—we in England as well as those in Italy,—“Is it a delusion, then, that there is a *paternal* government over all nations, not *merely* a King of kings, not *merely* a Judge of each separate people?” If it is a delusion, how strangely it has mingled with the faith of all ages, of all countries! How curiously it lay beneath that edifice of Roman greatness which the Emperor of France supposes was propped up by the decrees of Numa! How it spoke out through the *patria potestas*, through every institution of the commonwealth! What a mockery of it appeared under the empire; just that mockery which gave it the semblance of being the reparation and completion of a shattered

edifice; just that mockery which enabled it to assume the patronage of the universe! If the emperors were, as the biographer of Caesar thinks, the saviours of the world, this is the name in which they wrought out their salvation. If a Saviour of the world did appear in the days of Augustus, this was the Name in which His kingdom stood; this was that which His disciples proclaimed to all nations; this was that before which the old empire fell. The adoption of the name in after ages, whether by emperors or by popes, has been that which has checked the growth, has stifled the freedom of every nation in Christendom; yet every nation, when it has got quit of the assumption, has been seeking it again under some new shape, hoping so to find the reality. The Holy Alliance claimed a paternal authority over Europe when Napoleon fell; and, strangest of all phenomena, the descendants of Friedrich—the hero-king of Mr. Carlyle, the enemy of the Reich, the despiser of the Popedom, the pupil of Voltaire—have found it necessary to help out the perfection of drill with the dream of a spiritual paternity. The dogmas of the *Kreuz Zeitung* must sustain the demands for a military force by Herr Von Bismark.

May it not be, then, that the reality is to be the deliverance from the tyranny of the pretension, since there seems to be no other? May not this be the very charm which the liberators of Italy want? If they can obtain this, may they not justify the supremacy which she has been permitted to hold among the nations whilst they are renouncing the tyranny which has made it her curse? A Christendom asserting the principle which was expressed in its original charter, which is embodied in its prayer, must demand for each people within it freedom to cultivate and develop its own institutions, must proclaim to all peoples without it their highest human rights. We may have to pass to such a consummation through

more tremendous experiences of anarchy and of imperial despotism than we have yet known. But, to keep it steadily in sight, to hope for it against hope, to be sure that it must come at last, this may preserve us from sinking into the sloth of fatalism—this may help us to draw consolation from every source; from those who have believed that each people has an imperishable life and order; from those who have described the efforts of heroic men; from those who have recorded or have seen the fearful judgments on the crimes of nations; from those who, when they were sunk in their lowest abyss, have bidden them trust in God, and take courage from the doctrine that men are raised up when they are wanted to break, not to rivet, the fetters of their race.

NOTE.—In what I have said of Quintus Flaminius, I have not wished to pronounce upon his character—whether he was, as some say, a true Philhellenist, or whether he was only plotting to deliver the Greek cities from Macedonia that he might make them the subjects of Rome. That, no doubt, is an open question. I was thinking only of the ultimate result, which must be rather appalling to Italian patriots, if the partial deliverance of their country from the Austrian yoke has any parallel and precedent in the old story. I ought to have made an exception in speaking of Mr. Carlyle's abstinence from the common use of the term Providence, without a Provider, as the designation of some agency in the affairs of the world. He does resort to the phrase when he is speaking of Frederick's share in the spoils of Poland. The hero took, it seems, what Providence gave him. Surely a *dignus vindice nodus*, illustrating the remark of an eminent man that Providence means, for a number of people, "The Devil in a strait waistcoat!"

## CRADOCK NOWELL: A TALE OF THE NEW FOREST.

BY RICHARD DODDRIDGE BLACKMORE.

## CHAPTER I.

WITHIN the New Forest, and not far from its western boundary, as defined by the second perambulation of the good king Edward the First, stands the old mansion of the Nowells, the Hall of Nowelhurst. Not content with its exemption from all feudal service, their estate claims privileges, both by grant and custom. The benefit of Morefall trees in six walks of the forest, the right of digging marl and turbary ilimitable, common of pannage, and licence of drawing akermast, pastime even of hawking over some parts of the Crown land,—all these will be found catalogued as claims quite indefeasible, if the old estates come to the hammer, through the events that form my story. With many of these privileges, perhaps, the Royal Commissioners will deal unsentimentally, so soon as the Nowell influence shall be lost in the neighbouring boroughs; but as yet these claims have not been treated like those of some poor commoners. "Pooh, pooh, my man, don't be preposterous: you know, as well as I do, these gipsy freedoms were only allowed to balance the harm the deer did." And if the rights of that ancient family are ever called in question, some there are which will require a special Act to abolish them. For Charles the Second, of merry memory (saddened somewhat of late years), espied among the maids of honour an uncommonly pretty girl, whose name was Frances Nowell. He suddenly remembered, what had hitherto quite escaped him, how old Sir Cradock Nowell—beautiful Fanny's father—had saved him from a pike-thrust during Cromwell's "crowning mercy." In gratitude, of course, for this he began to pay most warm attentions to the Hampshire maiden. The father he pro-

pitiated with the only boon he craved—craved hitherto all in vain—a plenary grant of easements in the neighbourhood of his home. Soon as the charter had received the royal seal and signature, the old gentleman briskly thrust it away in the folds of his velvet mantle. Then taking the same view of gratitude which his liege and master took, home he went without delay to secure his privileges. When the king heard that the old cavalier was gone, and without any kissing of hands, he was in no wise disconcerted; it was the very thing he had intended. But when he heard that lovely Fanny was gone in the same old ricketty coach, even ere he began to whisper, and with no leave of the queen, His Majesty swore his utmost for nearly half an hour. Then having spent his fury, he laughed at the "sell," as he would have called it if the slang had been invented, and turned his royal attention to another of his wife's young maidens.

Nowelhurst Hall looks too respectable for any loose doings of any sort. It stands well away from the weeping of trees, like virtue shy of sentiment, and therefore has all the wealth of foliage shed, just where it pleases, around it. From a rising ground the house has sweet view of all the forest changes, and has seen three hundred springs wake in glory, and three hundred autumns waning. Spreading away from it wider, wider, slopes "the chace," as they call it, with great trees stretching paternal arms in the vain attempt to hold it. For two months of the twelve, when the heather is in blossom, all that chace is a glowing reach of amaranth and purple. Then it fades away to pale orange, dim olive, and a rusty brown when Christmas shudders over it; and so throughout young green and russet, till the July tint comes back again.

Sometimes in the spring morning the blackcocks—"heathpoults" as they call them—lift their necks in the livening heather, swell their ruffing breasts, and crow for their rivals to spar with them. Below the chace the whiskers of the curling wood converge into a giant beard, tufted here and there with hues of a varying richness; but for the main of it, swelling and waving, crisping, fronding, feathering, coying, and darkening here and there, until it reach the silver mirror of the spreading sea. And the seaman, looking upwards from the war-ship bound for India, looking back at his native land, for the last of all times it may be, over brushwood waves, and billows of trees, and the long heave of the gorse-land: "Now, that's the sort of place," he says, as the distant gables glisten; "the right sort of berth for our jolly old admiral, and me for his butler, please God, when we've licked them Crappos as they deserves."

South-west of the house, half a mile away, and scattered along the warren, the simple village of Nowelhurst digests its own joys and troubles. In and out the houses stand, endwise, crossways, set obliquely, anyhow except upside down, and some even tending that way. It looks like a game of dominoes, when the leaves of the table have opened and gape betwixt the players. Nevertheless, it is all very nice, for none are bitterly poor there; in any case of illness, they have the great house to help them, not proudly, but with feeling; and, more than this, they have a parson who leads instead of driving them. There are two little shops that do their best to under-sell each other, and one mild alehouse conducted strictly upon philosophic principles. Philosophy under pressure, a caviller would call it, for the publican knows, and so do all his customers, that if poachers were encouraged there, or any uproarious doings permitted (except in the week of the old and new year), down would come his licence-board, like a flag hauled in at sunset. As they draw two sorts of ale here, each worse than the other, this alehouse has two signs: first, it is

called the "Nowell Arms;" and then, on a board collateral, the "Welcome to Town, My Lads," as if that were the Nowell motto. The fact is, that an enterprising landlord, some three generations ago, employed a rising youth of the village, while apprenticed to a Lymington glazier, to paint in all their glory the quarterings of the Nowells. Truly graphic was this youth, and a real artist; ere ever he dipped his brush *respice finem* was in his mind, all unconsciously, as of genius. At the bottom of the slaps and dashes—jail-bars, cats, and housemaid's brushes, as he made them out, all of which he could do easily—was something he could not do. It was the low punning motto—but a decent pun for heraldry—*Ej oïda*, "I know-well." That stodged him altogether. He began to think deeply about it; and thought is fatal to action. In those days existed no *Bell's Life, Family Herald*, or *Cassell's Paper*, of universal responsiveness; ere that unlucky 'prentice could begin upon the big pine-board with paint (which belonged to his master) it was high time for him to go back bodily, and the chalks were hard against him. But, having genius, as I said, he rose to the emergency. He sawed into two the great board, so as to go between the windows, then jotted in one corner, with the stump end of his brush, kittens and chequers countless; then, starting free and great of heart, as all true painters should be, he immortalised, in letters all tumbling on their stomachs, the jolly landlord's warm salutation, closing with two right hands clasped, and blue from force of pressure.

Nowelhurst village is not on the main road, but keeps a straggling companionship with a quiet parish highway which requires much encouragement. This little highway does its best to blink the many difficulties, or, if that may not be, to compromise them, and establish a pleasant footing upon its devious wandering way from the Lymington road to Ringwood. Here it goes zig to escape the frown of a heavy-browed crest of furzery, and then it comes zag when no soul expects it, because a little stream

has babbled at it. It even seems to bob and dip, or jump, as the case may be, for fear of prying into an old oak's storey or dusting a piece of grass land. The hard-hearted traveller who lives express, and is bound for the train at Ringwood, curses, I fear, up hill and down dale, the quiet lane's inconsistency. What right has any road to do anything but go straight on end to its purpose? What decent road stops for a gossip with flowers—flowers overhanging the steep ascent—or eavesdropping on the rabbit-holes? And isn't it too bad? He is sure those ferns shelter the horse-fly—that horrible forest-fly, whose tickling no civilized horse can endure—and the gnats—why, they ought to be called mosquitoes—cloud breed, the nasty beggars, round the blossoms of the great spearwort, and the reeds where the stream is tinkling. Even locusts he has heard of as abounding in the New Forest; and, if a swarm of them comes this very hot weather, good-bye to him, horse and trap, newest patterns, sweet plaid, and chaste things.

And good-bye to thee, thou bustling "traveller"—whether technically so called or otherwise,—a very good fellow in thy way, but not of nature's pattern. So counter-sunk, so turned in a lathe, so pressed and rolled by steam-power, and then condensed hydraulically, that the extract of flowers upon thy shirt is but as the oil of machinery. But we who carry no chronometer, neither puff locomotively—now he is round the corner—let us saunter down this lane beyond the mark-oak and the black-smith's, even to the sandy rise whence the hall is seen. The rabbits are peeping forth again, for the breath of dew is shimmering; the sun has just finished a good day's work and is off for the western waters. Over the rounded heads and bosses, and then the darker dimples of the many-coloured foliage—many-coloured even now with summer's glory fusing it—over heads and shoulders, and breasts of heaving green floods the lucid amber, trembling at its own beauty—the first acknowledged leniency of the July sun. Now every

moment has its difference. Having once acknowledged that he may have been too downright in his ride of triumph, the sun, like every generous nature, scatters broadcast his amends. Overholt, and knoll, and lea, and narrow dingle, scooped with shadow where the brook is wimpling, and through the breaks of grass and gravel, where the heather purples, scarcely yet in prime flush, and down the tall wood overhanging, mossed and lichened, green and grey, as the grove of Druids—over, through, and under all flows pervading sunset. Then the birds begin discoursing of the thoughts within them—thoughts that are all happiness, and thrill and swell in utterance. Through the voice of the thicket-birds—the mavis, the whinchats, and the warblers—comes the tap of the yaffingale, the sharp, short cry of the honey-buzzard above the squirrel's cage, and the plaining of the turtle-dove.

But from birds and flowers, winding roads and woods, and waters where the trout are leaping, come we back to the only thing that interests a man much—the life, the doings, and the death of his fellow men. From this piece of yellow road, where the tree-roots twist and wrestle, we can see the great old house, winking out of countless windows, deep with sloping shadows, mantling back from the forest arms in a stately, sad reserve. It looks like a house that can endure and not talk about affliction, that could disclose some tales of passion were it not undignified, that remembers many a generation, and is mildly sorry for them. Oh! house of the Nowells, grey with shadow, wrapped in lonely grandeur, cold with the dews of evening and the tone of the forest nightfall, never through twenty generations hast thou known a darker fortune than is gathering now around thee, growing through the summer months, deepening ere the leaves fall! All men, we know, are born for trial, to work, to bear, to purify; but some there are whom God has marked for sorrow from their cradle. And strange as it appears to us, whose image is inverted, almost always these are they who *seem* to lack



no probation. The gentle and the large of heart, the meek and unpretending, yet gifted with a rank of mind that needs no self-assertion, trebly vexed in this wayfaring, I doubt not they are blest tenfold in the everlasting equipoise.

Perhaps it was the July evening that made me speculative, if the things, which in our deep heart we trust, savour of speculation; but now let us gaze from that hill again, under the fringe of autumn's gold, in the ripeness of October. The rabbits are gone to bed much earlier—comparatively, I mean, with the sun's retirement—because the dew is getting cold, and so has lost its flavour; and a nest of young weasels is coming abroad, “and really makes it unsafe, my dear,” says Mrs. Bunny to her third family, “to keep our long-standing engagements.” “Send cards instead,” says the timid Miss Cony; “I can write them, mamma, on a polypod.” Now, though the rabbits will not come to help, we can see the congregation returning down the village from the church, which is over the bridge, towards Lymington, and seems set aside to meditate. In straggling groups, as gossip lumps them, or the afternoon sermon disposes, home they straggle, wondering whether the girl has kept the fire up. Kept the fire “bliss” is the bodily form of the house-thought. But all the experienced matrons of the village have got together; and two, who have served as monthly nurses, are ready to pull side-hair out. There is nothing like science for setting people hard by the ears and the throat-strings. But we who are up in the forest here can catch no buzz of voices, nor even gather the point of dispute, while they hurry on to recount their arguments, and triumph over the virile mind, which, of course, knows nothing about it.

The question is when Lady Nowell will give an heir to the name, the house, the village, the estates, worth fifty thousand a year—an heir long time expected, hoped for in vain through six long years, now reasonably looked for. All the matrons have settled that it must be on a Sunday; everybody

knows that Sunday is the day for all grand ceremonies. Even Nanny Gammam's pigs— But why pursue their arguments—the taste of the present age is so wonderfully nice and delicate. I can only say that the Gammers, who snubbed the Gaffers upon the subject, miscarried by a fortnight, though right enough hebdomadally. They all fixed it for that day fortnight, but it was done while they were predicting. And not even the monthly nurses anticipated, no one ever guessed at the contingency of—twins.

## CHAPTER II.

“WHISHTREW, whishtrew, every bit of me! Whativer will I do, God knows. The blue ribbon there forenint me, and the blessed infants one to aich side!”

The good nurse fell against a chest of drawers, as she uttered this loud lament; the colour ebbed from her cherry cheeks, and her sturdy form shook with terror. She had scarcely turned her back, she could swear, upon her precious charges; and now only look at the murder of it! Two little cots stood side by side, not more than four feet asunder; and on each cot fast asleep lay a fine baby, some three or four days old. Upon the floor between them was a small rosette of blue ribbon. The infants were slumbering happily; and breathing as calmly as could be. Each queer little dump of a face was nestled into its pillow; and a small red podge, which was meant for an arm, lay crosswise upon the flannel. Nothing could look more delicious to the eyes of a fine young woman.

Nevertheless that fine young woman, Mrs. Biddy O'Gaghan, stood gazing from one cot to the other, in hopeless and helpless dismay. Her comely round face was drawn out with horror, her mouth wide open, and large tears stealing into her broad blue Irish eyes.

“And the illigant spots upon them, as like as two Blemishing spannels; nor the blessed saints in heaven, if so be they was tuk to glory, afore they do be made hairytickes, cudn't know one from

the ither, no more nor the winds from the brazes. And there go the doctor's bell again! Oh whurrastrew, whurra, whurra!"

Now Biddy O'Gaghan would scarcely have been head-nurse at Nowelhurst Hall, before she was thirty years old, but for her quick self-reliance. She was not the woman therefore to wring her hands long, and look foolish. Her Irish wit soon suggested so many modes of solution, all so easy, and all so delightfully free from reason, that the only question was how to listen to all at once. First she went and bolted carefully both the doors of the nursery. Then, with a look of triumph, she rushed to her yellow workbox, snatched up a roll of narrow tape, some pins, and a pair of scissors, and knelt upon the floor very gingerly, where the blue ribbon lay. Then, having pinned one end of the tape to the centre of the rosette, and the rosette itself to the carpet, she let the roll run with one hand, and drew the tape tight with the other, until it arrived at the nose of the babe ensconced in the right-hand cot. There she cut it off sharply, with a snip that awoke the child, who looked at her contemptively from a pair of large grey eyes. Leaving him to his meditations, she turned the tape on the pin, and drew it towards the nasal apology of the other infant. The measure would not reach; it was short by an inch and a half. What clearer proof could be given of the title to knot and pendency?

But alas for Biddy's triumph! The infant last geometrised awoke at that very moment, and lifting his soft fat legs, in order to cry with great comfort, disclosed the awkward fact that his left knee was nearer by three inches to the all-important rosette, than was any part of his brother. Biddy shook anew, as she drew the tape to the dimples. What is the legal centre of a human being? Upon my word I think I should have measured from the *ὀμφαλός*.

Ere further measurement could be essayed, all the premises were gone utterly; for the baby upon the right contrived to turn in the flannels, as an

unsettled silkworm pupa rolls in his cocoon. And he managed to revolve in the wrong direction; it was his fate through life. Instead of coming towards the rosette, as a selfish baby would have done, away he went with his grey eyes blinking at the handle of the door. Then he put up his lips, like the ring of a limpet, and poked both his little fists into his mouth.

"Well, I never," cried Bridget; "that settles it altogether. Plase the saints an' he were a rogue, it's this way he'd ha' come over on his blessed little empty belly. My darlin' dumplin' dillikins, it's you as it belongs to, and a fool I must be to doubt of it. Don't I know the bend o' your nose, and the way your purty lips dribbles then? And to think I was near a robbing you! What with the sitting up o' nights, and the worry of that carroty spalpeen, and the way as they sends my meals up, Paddy O'Gaghan as is in glory wud take me for another man's wife."

With great relief and strong conviction, Mrs. O'Gaghan began to stitch the truant rosette upon the cap of the last-mentioned baby, whence (or from that of the other) it had dropped through her own loose carelessness, before they were cuddled away. And with that ribbon she stitched upon him the heritage of the old family, the name of "Cradock Nowell," borne by the eight last baronets, and the largest estates and foremost rank in all the fair county of Hants.

"Sure an' it won't come off again," said Biddy to the baby, as she laid down her needle, for like all genuine Irishwomen she despised a thimble; "and it's meself as is to blame, for not taking a nick on your ear, dear. A big fool I must be only to plait it in afore, and only for thinkin as it wud come crossways, when you wint to your blissed mammy, dear. And little more you be likely to get there, I'm afeared, me darlin'. An' skeared anybody would be to hoort so much as a hair o' your skull, until such time as you has any, you little jule of jewels, and I kisses every bit on you, and knows what you

be thinking on in the dead hour of the night. Bless your ticksy-wicksies, and the ground as you shall step on, and the children as you shall have."

Unprepared as yet to contemplate the pleasures of paternity, Master Cradock Nowell elect opened great eyes and great mouth, in the untutored wrath of hunger; while from the other cot arose a lusty yell, as of one already visited by the injustice of the world. This bitter cry awoke the softness and the faint misgivings of the Irishwoman's heart.

"And the pity of the world it is ye can't both be the eldest. And bedad you should, if Biddy O'Gaghan had the making of the laws. There shan't be any one iver can say as ye haven't had justice, me honey."

Leaving both the unconscious claimants snugly wrapped and smiling, she called to her assistants, now calmly at tea in an inner room. "Miss Penny, run down now just, without thinking, and give my compliments, Mrs. O'Gaghan's kind compliments to the house-keeper's room, and would Mrs. Toaster oblige me with her big square scales? No weights you needn't bring, you know. Only the scales, and be quick with them."

"And please, ma'am, what shall I say as you wants them for?"

"Never you mind, Jane Penny. Wait you till your betters asks of you. And mayn't I weigh my grandfather's silver, without I ask you, Jane Penny? And likely you'd rather not, and good reason for that same, I dessay, after the way as I leaves it open."

Overlooking this innuendo, as well as the slight difficulty of weighing, without weights, imaginary bullion, Miss Penny hurried away; for the wrath of the nurse was rising, and it was not a thing to be tampered with. When Jane returned with the beam of justice, and lingered fondly in the doorway to watch its application, the head-nurse sidled her grandly into the little room, and turned the key upon her.

"Go and finish your tea, Miss Penny. No draughts in this room, if you please, miss. Save their little sowls, and devil

a hair upon them. Now come here, my two chickabiddies."

Adjusting the scales on the bed, where at night she lay with the infants warm upon her, she took the two red lumps of innocence in her well-rounded arms, and laid one in either scale. As she did so, they both looked up and smiled: it reminded them, I suppose, of being laid in their cradles. Blessing them both, and without any nervousness—for to her it could make no difference—she raised by the handle the balance. It was a very nice question—which baby rose first from the counterpane. So very slight was the difference, that the rosette itself might almost have turned the scale. But there was a perceptible difference, of perhaps about half an ounce, and that in favour of the sweet-tempered babe who now possessed the ribbon; and who, as the other rose slowly before him, drew up his own little toes, and tried prematurely to crow at him. Prematurely, my boy, in many ways.

No further mistrust was left in the mind of Mrs. O'Gaghan. Henceforth that rosetted infant is like to outweigh and outmeasure his brother, a hundred, a thousand fold, in every balance, by every standard, save those of self, and of true love, and perhaps of the Kingdom of Heaven.

### CHAPTER III.

THE reason why Mrs. O'Gaghan, generally so prompt and careful, though never very lucid, had neglected better precautions in a matter so important, was simply and solely this.—Lady Nowell, the delicate mother, was dying. It had been known, ever since the birth, that she had scarcely any chance of recovery. And Biddy loved her with all her warm heart, and so did every one in the house who owned a heart that *could* love. In the great anxiety, all things were upside down. None of the servants knew where to go for orders, and few could act without them; the house-keeper was all abroad; house-steward there was none; head-butler Hogstaff

cried in his pantry, and wiped his eyes with the leathers; and as for the master of them all, Sir Cradock Nowell himself, he rarely left the darkened room, and when he did he could not see well.

A sweet frail creature the young mother was, wedded too early, as happens here more often than we are aware of. Then disappointed, and grieving still more at her husband's disappointment, she had set her whole heart so long and so vainly upon prospective happiness, that now it was come she had not the strength to do anything more than smile at it. And smile she did, very sweetly, all the time she knew she was dying; she felt so proud of those two fine boys, and could not think how she had them. Ever so many times Sir Cradock, hanging fondly over her wan sweet face, ordered the little wretches away, who would keep on coming to trouble her. But every time she looked up at him with such a feeble glory, and such a dash of humour,—“You’ve got them at last, and now you don’t care a bit about them; but oh! please do for my sake;” every time her fading eyes followed them to the door so, that the loving husband, cold with the shadow of the coming void, had to whisper, “Bring them back, put them here between us.”

Although he knew that she was dying, he could not feel it yet; the mind admitted that fearful truth, but the heart repulsed it. Further as she sunk, and further yet, from his pleading gaze, the closer to her side he crept, the more he clasped her shadowy hands, and raised her drooping neck; the fonder grew the entreating words, the whispers of the love-time, faint smiles that hoped to win her smile, although they moved in tears. And smile she did once more on earth, through the ashy hue—the shadow of the soul’s wings fluttering—when two fresh lives, bought by her death, were shown for the farewell to her.

“And if it’s wrong, then, she’ll make it right,” thought the conscientious Biddy. I can take my oath on’t she knewed the differ from the very first,

though nobody else couldn’t see it, barring the caps they was put in. Now if only that gossoon will consent to her see them once more, and it can’t hurt the poor darlin’—and the blessing as comes from the death’s gaze—”

Mrs. O’Gaghan’s doubts were ended by the entrance of the doctor, a spare, short man, with a fiery face, red hair, and quick little eyes. He was not more than thirty years old, but knew his duties thoroughly; nevertheless, he would not have been there but for the sudden emergency. He was now come to fetch the nurse, having observed that the poor mother’s eyes were gleaming feebly, once and again, towards the door that led to the nursery; and at last she had tried to raise her hand, and point in that direction. So in came Biddy, sobbing hard, with a babe on either arm; and she curtsied cleverly to Sir Cradock without disturbing the equipoise. But the mother’s glance was not judicial, as poor Biddy had expected—her heart and soul were far beyond rosettes, and even titles. In one long, yearning look, she lingered on her new-born babes, then turned those hazy eyes in fondness to her kneeling husband’s, then tried to pray or bless the three, and shivered twice, and died.

For days and weeks Sir Cradock Nowell bore his life but did not live. All his clear intellect and strong will, noble plans, and useful labours, all his sense of truth and greatness, lay benumbed and frozen in the cold track of death. He could not bear to see his children, he would not even hear of them; “they had robbed him of his loved one, and what good were they? Little red things; perhaps he would love them when they grew like their mother.” Those were not his expressions, for he was proud and shy; but that was the form his thoughts would take, if they could take any. No wonder that he, for a time, was lost beyond the verge of reason; because that blow, which most of all stuns and defeats the upright man, had descended on him—the blow to the sense of justice. This a man of large mind feels often from his

fellow-man, never from his Maker. But Sir Craddock was a man of intellect, rather than of mind. To me a large mind seems to be strong intellect quickened with warm heart. Sir Craddock Nowell had plenty of intellect, and plenty of heart as well, but he kept the two asunder. So much the better for getting on in the world; so much the worse for dealing with God. A man so constituted rarely wins, till overborne by trouble, that only knowledge which falls (like genius) where our Father listeth. So the bereaved man measured justice by the ells and inches of this world.

And it did seem very hard, that he who had lived for twenty years, from light youth up to the balance age of forty, not only without harming any fellow-mortal, but, upon fair average, to do good in the world—it seemed, I say—it *was*, thought he—most unjust that such a man could not set his serious heart upon one little treasure without losing it the moment he had learned its value. Now, with pride to spur sad memory—bronze spurs to a marble horse—he remembered how his lovely Violet chose him from all others. Gallant suitors crowded round her, for she was rich as well as beautiful; but she quietly came from out them all for him, a man of twice her age. And he who had cared for none till then, and had begun to look on woman as a stubby-bearded man looks back at the romance of his first lather, he first admired her grace and beauty, then her warmth of heart and wit, then, scorning all analysis, her own sweet self; and loved her.

A few days after the funeral he was walking sadly up and down in his lonely library, caring no whit for his once-loved books, for the news of the day, or his business, and listless to look at anything, even the autumn sunset; when the door was opened quietly, and shyly through the shadows stole his schoolfellow of yore, his truest friend, John Rosedew. With this gentleman I take a very serious liberty; but he never yet was known to resent a liberty taken honestly. That, however, does not justify me. "John

Rosedew" I intend to call him, because he likes it best; and so he would though ten times a Bachelor of Divinity, a late Vice-Principal of his college, and the present Rector of Nowelhurst. Formerly I did my best, loving well the character, to describe that simple-minded, tender-hearted yeoman, John Huxtable, of Tossil's Barton, in the county of Devon. Like his, as like as any two of Nature's ever-varied works, was the native grain and staple of the Rev. John Rosedew. Beside those little inborn and indying variations which Nature still insists on, that she may know her sons apart, those twogenial Britons differed both in mental and bodily endowments, and through education. In spite of that, they were, and are, as like to one another as any two men can be who have no smallness in them. Small men run pretty much of a muchness; as the calibre increases, so the divergence multiplies.

Farmer Huxtable was no fool; but having once learned to sign his name, he had attained his maximum of literary development; John Rosedew, on the other hand, although a strong and well-built man, who had pulled a good oar in his day, was not, in bulk and stature, a match for Hercules or Milo. Unpretending, gentle, a lover of the truth, easily content with others, but never with himself, even now, at the age of forty, he had not overcome the bashfulness and diffidence of a fine and sensitive nature. And, first-rate scholar as he was, he would have lost his class at Oxford solely through that shyness, unless a kind examiner, who saw his blushing agony, had turned from some commonplace of Sophocles to a glorious passage of Pindar. Then, carried away by the noble poet, John Rosedew forgot the schools, the audience, even the row of examiners, and gave grand thoughts their grand expression, breathing free as the winds of heaven. Nor till his voice began to falter from the high emotion, and his heart beat fast, though not from shame, and the tears of genius touched by genius were difficult to check, not till then knew he, or guessed, that every eye was fixed upon him, that every heart



was thrilling, that even the stiff examiners bent forward like eager children, and the young men in the gallery could scarcely keep from cheering. Then suddenly, in the full sweep of magnificence, he stopped, like an eagle shot.

Now the parson, ruddy-cheeked, with a lock of light brown hair astray upon his forehead, and his pale, blue eyes looking much as if he had just awoke and rubbed them, came shyly and with deep embarrassment into the darkening room. For days and days he had thought and thought, but could not at all determine whether, and when, and how, he ought to visit his ancient friend. His own heart suggested first that he ought to go at once, if only to show the bereaved one that still there were some to love him. To this right impulse—and the impulse of a heart like his could seldom be a wrong one—rose counter-checks of worldly knowledge, such little as he had. And it seemed to many people strange and unaccountable, that if Mr. Rosedew piqued himself upon anything whatever, it was not on his learning, his purity, or benevolence, it was not on his gentle bearing, or the chivalry of his soul, but on a fine acquirement, whereof in all opinions (except, perhaps, his own) he possessed no jot or tittle—a strictly-disciplined and astute experience of the world. Now this supposed experience told him that it might seem coarse and forward to offer the hard grasp of friendship ere the soft clasp of love was cold; that he, as the clergyman of the parish, would appear to presume upon his office; that no proud man could ever bear to have his anguish pryed into. These, and many other misgivings and objections, met his eager longings to help his dear old friend.

Suddenly and to his great relief—for he knew not how to begin, though he felt how and mistrusted it—the old friend turned upon him from his lonely pacing, and held out both his hands. Not a word was said by either; what they meant required no telling, or was told by silence. Long time they sat in

the western window, John Rosedew keeping his eyes from sunset, which did not suit them then. At last he said, in a low voice, which it cost him much to find,—

“What name, dear Craddock, for the younger babe? Your own, of course, for the elder.”

“No name, John, but his sweet mother’s; unless you like to add his uncle’s.”

John Rosedew was puzzled lamentably. He could not bear to worry his friend any more upon the subject; and yet it seemed to him sad, false concord, to christen a boy as “Violet.” But he argued that, in botanical fact, a violet is male as well as female, and at such a time he could not think of thwarting a widower’s yearnings. In spite of all his worldly knowledge, it never occurred to his simple mind that poor Sir Craddock meant the lady’s maiden surname, which I believe was “Incedon.” And yet he had suggestive precedent brought even then before him, for Sir Craddock Nowell’s brother bore the name of “Clayton,” which name John Rosedew added now, and found relief in doing so.

Thus it came to pass, that the babe without rosette was baptized as “Violet Clayton,” while the owner of the bauble received the name of “Craddock”—Craddock Nowell, now the ninth in lineal succession. The father was still too broken down to care about being present; godfathers and godmothers made all their vows by proxy. Mrs. O’Gaghan held the infants, and one of them cried, and the other laughed. The rosette was there in all its glory, and received a tidy sprinkle; and the wearer of it was, as usual, the one who took things easily. As the common children said, who came to see the great ones “loustering,” the whole affair was rather like a white burying than a baptism. Nevertheless, the tenants and labourers moistened their semi-regenerate clay with many a fontful of good ale, to ensure the success of the ceremony.

## CHAPTER IV.

It is not pleasant to recur, to have a relapse of chronology, neither does it show good management on the part of a writer. Nevertheless, being free of time among these forest by-ways, I mean to let the pig now by the ear unfold his tail, or curl it up, as the weather suits him. And now he runs back for a month or two, trailing the rope from his left hind-leg.

Poor Lady Nowell had become a mother, as indeed we learned from the village gossip, nearly a fortnight before the expected time. Dr. Jellicorse Bul-ler, a very skilful man, in whom the Hall had long confided, was suddenly called to London, the day before that on which we last climbed the hill towards Ringwood. With Sir Craddock's full consent, he obeyed the tempting summons. So in the hurry and flutter of that October Sunday, it seemed a most lucky thing to obtain, in a thinly-peopled district, the prompt attendance of any medical man. And but that a gallant regiment then happened to be on the march from Dorchester to Southampton, thence to embark for India, no masculine aid would have been forthcoming till after the event. But the regimental surgeon, whose name was Rufus Hutton, did all that human skill could do, and saved the lives of both the infants, but could not save the young mother. Having earned Sir Craddock's lasting gratitude, and Biddy O'Gahan's strong execrations, he was compelled to rejoin his regiment, then actually embarking.

The twins grew fast, and throve a-main, under Mrs. O'Gahan's motherly care, and shook the deep-rooted country faith, that children brought up by hand are sure to be puny weaklings. Nor was it long till nature re-asserted her authority, and claimed her rights of compensation. The father began to think more and more, first of his duty towards the dead mother, and then of his duty towards his children; and ere long, affection set to work, and drove

duty away till called for, which happened as we shall see presently. By the time those two pretty babies were "busy about their teeth," Craddock Nowell the elder was so deep in odontology, that Biddy herself could not answer him, and was afraid to ask any questions. He watched each little white cropper, as a girl peers day by day into a starting hyacinth. Then, when they could walk, they followed daddy everywhere, and he never was happy without them. It was a pretty thing to see them toddling down the long passages, stopping by the walls to prattle, crawling at the slippery parts, where the newly-invented tiles shone. And the father would dance away backwards from them, forgetting all about the grand servants, clapping his hands to encourage them, and holding an orange as prize for a crawling-race—then whisk away round a corner, and lay his cheek flat to the wainscot, to peep at his sons, and learn which of them was the braver. And in those days, I think, he was proud to find that Craddock Nowell, the heir of the house, was by far the more gallant baby. Which of the two was the prettier, not even sharp Biddy could say; so strongly alike were they.

Then, as they turned two years and a half, and could jump with both feet at once, without the spectator growing sad on the subject of biped deficiencies, their father would lie down on the carpet, and make them roll and jump over him. He would watch their little spotted legs with intense appreciation; and if he got ruffled or pinched from childhood's wild sense of humour, instead of depressing him, I declare it quite set him up for the day, sir. And he never bothered himself or them by attempts to forecast their destinies. There they were enjoying themselves, uproariously happy, as proud as Punch of their exploits, and the father a great deal prouder. All three as blest for the moment, as full of life and rapture, as God meant His creatures to be, so often as they are wise enough; and in the name of God, let them be so!

But then there came a time of spoiling, a time of doing just what they liked, even after their eyes were opening to the light and shadow of right and wrong. If they smiled, or pouted, or even cried—though in that they were very moderate—in a fashion which descended to them from their darling mother, thereupon great right and law, and even toughest prejudice, fell flat as rolled dough before them. So they toddled about most gloriously, with a strong sense of owning the universe.

Next ensued a time of mighty retribution. *Astræa*, with her feelings hurt, came down for a slashing moment. Fond as he was, and far more weak than he ever had been before, Sir Craddock Nowell was not a fool. He saw it was time to check the licence, ere mischief grew irretrievable. Something flagrant occurred one day; both the children were in for it; they knew as well as possible that they were jolly rogues together, and together in their childish counsel they resolved to stand it out. I think it was that they had stolen into Mrs. Toaster's choicest cupboard, and hardly left enough to smell at in a two-pound pot of green-gage jam. Anyhow, there they stood, scarlet in face and bright of eye, back to back, with their broad white shoulders, their sturdy legs set wide apart, and their little heels stamping defiantly. Mrs. Toaster had not the heart to do anything but kiss them, with a number of "O fies!" and they accepted her kisses indignantly, and wiped their lips with their pinafores. They knew that they were in the wrong, but they had not tried to conceal it, and they meant to brazen it out. They looked such a fine pair of lords of the earth, and vindicated their felony with so grand an air, such high contempt of all justice, that Cookey and Hogstaff, empaneled as jury, said, "Drat the little darlings, let 'em have the other pot, mem!" But as their good star would have it, Mrs. O'Gaghan came after them. Upsetting the mere *nisi prius* verdict, she marched them off, one in either hand, to the great judge sitting *in banco*, Sir Craddock him-

self, in the library. With the sense of heavy wrong upon them, the little hearts began to fail, as they climbed with tugs instead of jumps, and no arithmetic of the steps, the narrow flight of stone stairs that led from regions culinary. But they would not shed a tear, not they, nor even say they were sorry, otherwise Biddy (who herself was crying) would have let them go with the tap of a battledore.

Poor little souls, they got their deserts with very little ceremony. When Biddy began to relate their crime, one glance at their father's face was enough; they hung behind, and dropped their eyes, and flushed all under their curling hair. Yet little did they guess the indignity impending. Hogstaff had followed all the way, and so had Mrs. Toaster, to plead for them. Sir Craddock sent them both away, and told Biddy to wait outside. Then he led his children to an inner room, and calmly explained his intentions. These were of such a nature that the young offenders gazed at each other in dumb amazement and horror, which very soon grew eloquent as the sentence was being executed. But the brave little fellows cried more, I believe, at the indignity than the pain of it.

Then the stern father ordered them out of his sight for the day, and forbade every one to speak to them until the following morning; and away the twins went, hand in hand, down the cold, cruel passage, their long flaxen hair all flowing together, and shaking to the sound of their contrite sobs and heart-pangs. At the corner, by the steward's room, they turned with one accord, and looked back wistfully at their father. Sir Craddock had been saying to himself, as he rubbed his hands after the exercise—"A capital day's work: what a deal of good it will do them; the self-willed little rascals!" but the look cast back upon him was so like their mother's when he had done anything to vex her, that away he rushed to his bedroom, and had to wash his face afterwards.

But, of course, he held to his stern resolve to see them no more that evening, otherwise the lesson would be

utterly thrown away. Holding to it as he did, the effect surpassed all calculation. It was the turning-point in their lives.

"My boy, you know it hurts me a great deal more than you," says the hypocritical usher, who rather enjoys the cane-swing. The boy knows it is hypocrisy, and is morally hurt more than physically. But wholly different is the result when the patient knows and feels the deep love of the agent, and cannot help believing that justice has flogged the judge. And hitherto their flesh had been intemperate and inviolable; the strictest orders had been issued that none should dare to slap them, and all were only too prone to coax and pet the beautiful angels. Little angels: treated so, they would soon have been little devils. As for the warning given last week, they thought it a bit of facetiousness: so now was the time, of all times, to strike temperately, but heavily.

That night they went to bed before dark, without having cared for tea or toast, and Biddy's soft heart ached by the pillow, as they lay in each other's arms, hugged one another, having now none else in the world to love, and sobbed their little troubles off into moaning slumber.

On the following morning, without any concert or debate, and scarcely asking why, the little things went hand in hand, united more than ever by the recent visitation, as far as the door of their father's bedroom. There they slunk behind a curtain; and when he came out, the rings above fluttered with fear and love and hope. Much as the father's heart was craving, he made believe to walk onward, till Craddy ran out, neck or nothing, and sprang into his arms.

After this great event, their lives flowed on very happily into boyhood, youth, and manhood. They heartily loved and respected their father; they could never be enough with John Rosedew; and although they quarrelled and fought sometimes, they languished and drooped immediately when parted from one another. As for Biddy

O'Gaghan, now a high woman in the household, her only difficulty was that she never could tell of her two boys which to quote as the more astounding. "If you please, ma'am," she always concluded, "there'll not be so much as the lean of a priest for anybody iver to choose atwane the bootiful two on them. No more than there was on the day when my blissed self—murder now!—any more, I manes, nor the differ a peg can find 'twane a murphy and a purratie. And a Murphy I must be, to tark, so free as I does, of the things as is above me. Says Patrick O'Geoghagan to meself one day—glory be to his sowl, and a gentleman every bit of him, lave out where he had the smallpux—"Biddy," he says, 'hould your pratie-trap, or I'll shove these here bellises down it.' And for my good it would have been, as I am thankful to acknowledge that same, though I didn't see it that day, thank the Lord. Ah musha, musha, a true gentleman he were, and lave me out his fellow, ma'am, if iver you comes across him."

But, in spite of Biddy's assertion, there were many points of difference, outward and inward too, between Craddock and Clayton Nowell. By this time the "Violet" was obsolete, except with Sir Craddock, who rather liked it, and with young Crad, who had corrupted it into the endearing "Viley." John Rosedew had done his utmost to extinguish the misnomer, being sensitive on the subject, from his horror of false concord, as attributed to himself. Although the twins were so much alike in stature, form, and feature that it required care to discern them after the sun was down, no clear-sighted person would miscall them when they both were present, and the light was good. Clayton Nowell's eyes were brown, Craddock's a dark grey; Craddock's hair was one shade darker, and grew more away from his forehead, and the expression of his gaze came from a longer distance. Clayton always seemed up for bantering; Craddock anxious to inquire, and to joke about it afterwards, if occasion offered. Then Craddock's

head inclined, as he walked, a little towards the left shoulder; Clayton's hung, almost imperceptibly, somewhat to the right; and Cradock's hand was hard and dry, Clayton's soft as good French kid.

And, as regards the inward man, they differed far more widely. Every year their modes of thought, fancies, tastes, and habits, were diverging more decidedly. Clayton sought command and power, and to be admired; Cradock's chief ambition was to be loved by every one. And so with intellectual matters; Clayton showed more dash and brilliance, Cradock more true sympathy, and thence more grasp and insight. Clayton loved the thoughts which strike us, Cradock those which move us subtly. But, as they lived not long together, it is waste of time to *finesse* between them. Whatever they were, they loved one another, and could not bear to be parted.

Meanwhile their "Uncle John" as they always called Mr. Rosedew—their uncle only in the spirit—was nursing and making much of a little daughter of his own. Long before Lady Nowell's death, indeed for ten long years before he obtained the living of Nowelhurst, with the little adjunct of Rushford, he had been engaged to a lady-love much younger than himself, whose name was Amy Venn. Not positively engaged, I mean, for he was too shy to pop the question to any one but himself, for more than seven years of the ten. But all that time Amy Venn was loving him, and he was loving her, and each would have felt it a grievous blow, if the other had started sideways. Miss Venn was poor, and had none except her widowed mother to look to, and hence the parson was trebly shy of pressing a poor man's suit. He, a very truthful mortal, had pure faith in his Amy, and she had the like in him. So for several years he shunned the common-room, and laid by all he could from his fellowship, college-appointments, and professorship. But, when his old friend Sir Cradock Nowell presented him to the benefice—not a

very gorgeous one, but enough for a quiet parson's family—he took a clean white tie at once, vainly strove to knot it grandly, actually got his scout to brush him, and after three glasses of common-room port, strode away to his Amy at Kidlington. There he found her training the apricot on the south wall of her mother's cottage, one of the three great apricot trees that paid the rent so nicely. What a pity they were not peaches; they would have yielded so fit a simile. But peach-bloom will not thrive at Kidlington, except upon ladies' faces.

Three months afterwards, just when all was arranged, and Mrs. Venn was at last persuaded that Hampshire is not all pigs and rheumatism, forests, and swamps, and charcoal, when John, with his voice rather shaky, and a patch of red where his whiskers should have been, had proclaimed his own banns three times—for he was a very odd fellow in some things, and scorned the "royal road" to wedlock—just at that time, I say, poor Lady Nowell's confinement upset all calculation, and her melancholy death flung a pall on wedding-favours. Not only through respect, but from real sympathy with the faithful friend, John Rosedew and Amy held counsel together, and deferred the long-pending bridal. "*Ὅσον μακρότερον, τόσον μακάριον*," said John, who always thought in Greek, except when Latin hindered him; but few young ladies will admit—and nowadays they all understand it—that the apophthegm is applied well.

However, it did come off at last; John Rosedew, when his banns had been rolling in his mind, in the form of Greek *senarii*, for six months after the first time of out-asking, set to and read them all over again in public; to revive their efficacy, and to surrebut all let and hindrance. He was accustomed now to so many stops, that he felt surprised when nobody rose to interpellate. And so the banns of John Rosedew, bachelor, and Amy Venn, spinster, &c. were read six times in Nowelhurst Church, and six times from



the desk at Kidlington. And, sooth to say, it was not without significance.

"*Tantæ molis erat to produce our beautiful Amy.*"

On the nuptial morning, Sir Craddock, whom they scarcely expected, gathered up his broken courage, sank his own hap in another's, and was present and tried to enjoy himself. How shy John Rosedew was, how sly to conceal his blushes, how spry when the bride glanced towards him, and nobody else looked that way—all this very few could help observing; but they liked him too well to talk of it. Enough that the friend of his youth, thoroughly understanding John, was blessed with so keen a perception of those simple little devices, that at last he did enjoy himself, which he deserved to do for trying.

When the twins were nearly three years old, Mrs. Rosedew presented John with the very thing he wished for most, an elegant little girl. And here the word "elegant" is used with forethought, and by prolepsis; though Mrs. O'Gaghan, lent for a time to the rectory, employed that epithet at the first glance, even while announcing the gender.

"Muckstraw, then, and she's illigant intirely; an' it's hopin I be as there'll only be two on her, one for each of me darlin' boys. And now cudn't you manage it, doctor dear?"

But alas! the supply was limited, and no duplicate ever issued. Lucina saw John Rosedew's pride, and was afraid of changing his character. To all his Oxford friends he announced the fact of his paternity in letters commencing—"Now what do you think, my dear fellow, what do you think of this—the most astounding thing has happened," &c. &c. He thought of it himself so much, that his intellect grew dreamy, and he forgot all about next Sunday's sermon, until he was in the pulpit. And four weeks after that he made another great mistake, which horrified him desperately, though it gratified the parish.

It had been arranged between his Amy and himself, that if she felt quite

strong enough, she should appear in church on the Sunday afternoon, to offer the due thanksgiving. In the gray old church at Nowellhurst, a certain pew had been set apart, by custom immemorial, for the use of goodwives who felt grateful for their safe deliverance. Here Mrs. Rosedew was to present herself at the proper period, with the aid of Biddy's vigorous arm down the hill from the rectory. As yet she was too delicate to bear the entire service. The August afternoon was sultry, and the church-doors stood wide open, while the bees among the churchyard thyme drowed a sleepy sermon. As luck would have it, a recruiting sergeant, toling for the sons of Ytene, finding the road so dusty, and the alehouse barred against him, came sauntering into the church during the second lesson, for a little mild change of air. Espying around him some likely rustics, he stationed himself in the vacant "churching pew," because the door was open, and the position prominent. "All right," thought the rector, who was very short-sighted, "how good of my darling Amy to come! But I wonder she wears her scarlet cloak to come to church with, and in such weather! But perhaps Dr. Buller ordered it, for fear of her catching cold." So at the proper moment, he drew his surplice round him, looked full at the sergeant standing there by the pillar, and commenced majestically, though with a trembling voice—

"Forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God of His goodness to give you safe deliverance, and hath preserved you in the great danger of childbirth, you shall therefore give hearty thanks unto God and say—"

The sergeant looked on very primly, with his padded arms tightly folded, and his head thrown back, calling war and victory into his gaze, for the credit of the British army. Then he wondered angrily what the — those chawbacons could see in him to be grinning at.

"I am well pleased," &c. continued John Rosedew, sonorously; for he had a magnificent voice, and still regarding the sergeant with a look of tender in-

terest. Even Sir Cradock Nowell could scarcely keep his countenance; but the parson went through the whole of it handsomely and to the purpose, thinking only, throughout it, of God's great mercies to him. So beloved he was already, and so much respected, that none of the congregation had the heart to tell him of his mistake, as he talked with them in the churchyard; though he thought even then that he must have his hands, as he often had, at the back of his neck.

But on his way home he overtook an old hobbler, who enjoyed a joke more than a scruple.

"How are you, Simon Tapscott? How do you do to-day? Glad to see you at church, Simon," said the parson, holding his hand out, as he always did to his parishioners, unless they had disgraced themselves.

"Purty vair, measter; purty vair I be, vor a woald galley baggar as ave bin in the Low Countries, and dwoant know sin from rightousness." This last was a gross perversion of a passage in the sermon which had ruffled ancient Simon. "Can't goo much, howiver, by rason of the rhymatics. Now eud 'e do it to I, measter? eud 'e do it to I, and I'll thraw down bath my critches? Good vor one sojer, good vor anoother."

"Do what for you, Simon? Fill your old canteen, or send you a pound of baccy?" asked the parson, mildly chaffing.

"Noo, noo; none o' that. There baint noo innard parts grace of the Lord in that. Choorch I handsomely, zame as 'e dwoed that strapping soger now jist."

"What, Simon! Why, Simon, do you know what you are saying——" But I cannot bear to tell of John Rosedew humiliated; he was humble enough by nature. So fearful was the parson of renewing that recollection within the sacred walls, that no thanks were offered there for the birth of sweet Amy Rosedew, save by, or on behalf of, that recruiting sergeant.

## CHAPTER V.

WHEN Cradock and Clayton were ten years old, they witnessed a scene which puzzled them and dwelt long in their boyish memories. Job Hogstaff was going to Ringwood, and they followed him down the passage towards the entrance-hall, emphatically repeating the commissions with which they had charged him. Old Job loved them as if they were his grandsons, and would do his utmost to please them, but they could not trust his memory, or even his capacity.

"Now, Job," cried little Cradock, pulling at his coat-lappet, "it's no good pretending that you know all, when you won't even stop to listen. I'm sure you'll go and make some great mistake, as you did last Tuesday. Mind you tell Mr. Stride it's for Master Cradock Nowell, and they must be sure to give you a good one, or I shall send it back. Now just tell me what I have told you. I ought to have written it down, but I wasn't sure how to spell 'groove.'"

"Why, Master Crad, I'm to say a long spill, very sharp at the end."

"Sharp at the *point*, Job, not blunt at the end like a new black-lead pencil."

"And whatever you do, Job, don't forget the catgut for my crossbow, one size larger than last time."

"Hold your jaw, Viley, till I've quite finished; or he'll ask for a top made of catgut."

Both the boys laughed at this; you could hear them all down the long passage. Any small folly makes a boy laugh.

"Well, Master Crad, you *must* think me a 'muff,' as you call it. And the groove is to go quite up to the spill; there must be two rings below the crown of it."

"Below the crown, indeed! On the fat part, I said three times. Now, Viley, you know you heard me."

"Well, well," cried Job in despair, "two rings on the fat part, and no knot at all in the wood, and at least six

inches round, and, and, well—I think that's all of it, thank the Lord."

"All of it indeed! Well, you *are* a nice fellow! Didn't I tell you so, Viley? Why you've left out altogether the most important point of all, Job. The wood must be a clear bright yellow, or else a very rich gold colour, and I'm to pay for it next Tuesday, because I spent my week's money yesterday, as soon as ever I got it, and—oh, Viley! can't you lend a fellow sixpence?"

"No, not to save my life, sir. Why, Craddy, you know I wouldn't let you go tick if I could."

The boys rushed at one another, half in fun and half in affection, and, seizing each other by the belt of the light-plaid tunic, away they went dancing down the hall, while Hogstaff whistled a polka gently, with his old eyes glistening after them. A prettier pair, or better matched, never set young locks afloat. Each put his healthy, clear, bright face on the shoulder of the other, each flung out his short-socked legs, and pointed his dainty feet. You could see their shapely calves jerked up as they went with double action, and the hollow of the back curved in, as they threw asunder recklessly, then clasped one another again, and you thought they must both reel over. Sir Cradock Nowell hated trousers, and would not have their hair cropped, because it was like their mother's; otherwise they would not have looked one quarter so picturesque.

Before the match was fairly finished—for they were used to this sort of thing, and the object always was to see which would give in first—it was cut short most unexpectedly. While they were taking a sharp pirouette down at the end of the hall—and as they whirled round I defy their father to have known the

one from the other—the door of the steward's room opened suddenly, and a tall dark woman came out. The twins in full merriment dashed up against her, and must have fallen if she had not collared them with strong and bony arms. Like little gentlemen, as they were, every atom of them, they turned in a moment to apologize, and their cheeks were burning red. They saw a gaunt old woman, wide-shouldered, stern, and forcible.

"Oo, ah! a bonnie pair ye've gat, as I see in all my life lang. But ye'll get no luck of them. Tak' the word of threescore year, ye'll never get no luck o' them, you that calls yoursel' Craydock Nowell."

She was speaking to Sir Cradock, who had followed her from the steward's room, and who seemed as much put out as a proud man of fifty ever cares to show himself. He made no answer, and the two poor children fell back against a side-bench.

"I'll no talk o' matters noo. You've a gi'en me my refocsal, and I tak it once for all. But ye'll be sorry for the day ye did it, Craydock Nowell."

To the great amazement of Hogstaff, who was more taken aback than any one else, Sir Cradock Nowell, without a word, walked to the great front door with ceremony, as if he were leading a peeress out. He did not offer his arm to the woman, but neither did he shrink from her; she gathered her dark face up again from its softening glance at the children, and without another word or look, but sweeping her skirt around her, away she walked down the broad front road, as stiff and as stern as the oak trees.

*To be continued.*

"LAST NIGHT."

WHERE were you last night? I watched at the gate;  
I went down early, I stayed down late.

Were you snug at home, I should like to know,  
Or were you in the coppice wheedling Kate?

She's a fine girl, with a fine clear skin;  
Easy to woo, perhaps not hard to win.

Speak up like a man and tell me the truth:  
I'm not one to grow downhearted and thin.

If you love her best speak up like a man;  
It's not I will stand in the light of your plan:

Some girls might cry and scold you a bit,  
And say they could'n't bear it; but I can.

Love was pleasant enough, and the days went fast;  
Pleasant while it lasted, but it needn't last;

Awhile on the wax, and awhile on the wane,  
Now dropped away into the past.

Was it pleasant to you? to me it was:

Now clean gone as an image from glass,

As a goodly rainbow that fades away,

As dew that steams upward from the grass,

As the first spring day, or the last summer day,

As the sunset flush that leaves heaven grey,

As a flame burnt out for lack of oil,

Which no pains relight or ever may.

Good luck to Kate and good luck to you:

I guess she'll be kind when you come to woo.

I wish her a pretty face that will last,

I wish her a husband steady and true.

Hate you? not I, my very good friend;

All things begin and all have an end.

But let broken be broken; I put no faith

In quacks who set up to patch and mend.

Just my love and one word to Kate:

Not to let time slip if she means to mate;—

For even such a thing has been known

As to miss the chance while we weigh and wait.

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI.

## LUCRETII.

THE last two years have made large amends to a poet who has met with imperfect sympathy in modern Europe. Professor Sellar's *Roman Poets of the Republic* appeared in 1863. Four chapters are devoted to Lucretius. The fine analysis, which no trait of thought or style has eluded, is perhaps a less strong claim upon our gratitude than the faculty by which Professor Sellar has blended those traits into a complete and harmonious portrait. In October last, Mr. H. A. J. Munro's edition of the *De Rerum Natura* was published at Cambridge; and, while it applies scientific criticism to a text once before handled with brilliancy but never with judgment also, it illustrates subject-matter and language by a commentary which is a storehouse of Latin scholarship.

Arrears were certainly due from English scholars to Lucretius. His reception in modern times has nowhere been warm, but in England it has been singularly cold. In the interval between the Conquest and the Reformation, almost every Latin poet ancient and modern was ransacked for quotations, paraphrased, translated, burlesqued, converted to every imaginable use sacred and profane. During that period of little less than five centuries, Lucretius is not once mentioned by an English writer. His wealth of thought and imagery is not once laid under contribution. The mind of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was capable of deriving two gratifications from Latin poetry, and two only. The florid declamation of the silver age pleased the gaudy taste and the rude ear to which the cadences of Virgil seemed tame. The martial legends of Troy and Thebes, the Voyage of the Argo and the Labours of Hercules, came home to those who never tired of listening to the passages of Celidon or Roncesvalles, the Quest of the Holy Graal, the Encounter

of Sir Guy de Warwick with the Monster of Dunsmore Heath. Hence Lucan finds six editors before the year 1500. Hence Statius and Valerius Flaccus are more popular than Virgil and Horace. But a better day was about to dawn. Early in the thirteenth century the example of the Provençal poets created the vernacular poetry of Florence. Early in the fourteenth appeared the *Divine Comedy*, the *Decameron*, and the *Sonnets*. From the court of Edward III. Chaucer went to meet Petrarch and Boccaccio at Milan. He returned to found a new school of poetry with the *Canterbury Tales*, and to ridicule the old school in the *Rhyme of Sir Topas*. A corresponding change takes place in the use of the Roman classics. The allusions assume a literary cast. Instead of Alexander the Great learning falconry on a steed of Narbonne, or Theseus riding at the head of his knights to the Erechtheum on Sunday, we have Cressida enlivening her leisure with the *Thebaid*, and Pandarus refuting Troilus from archbishop Bradwardine. Chaucer is deeply indebted to Statius. But he does not borrow lists of heroes set up to be knocked down—lists like that in the ninth book of the *Thebaid*,

"Sternit Iona Chromis, Chromin Antiphus,  
Antiphon Hypseus,  
Hypseun Astacides."

He borrows florid imagery—the Altar of Clemency, the dazzling temple of the Thracian Mars, the disconsolate Dryads whose trees were felled for Arcite's pyre. Gower, in his *Confessio Amantis*, quotes Horace's *Satires*, the *Metamorphoses*, and the *Æneid*. Now that it was becoming usual to employ the classics in pointing morals and adorning tales, it might have been expected that had Lucretius been known at all some one would have stumbled upon such passages as the death of Iphigenia, the comparison of a new-born child to



a shipwrecked sailor, the rebuke of Nature to her thankless guest. Gower himself would have found a mine of illustration in the last two hundred lines of the third book. But the author of the *De Rerum Natura* has not even a place in Chaucer's House of Fame. To be known at all and to be excluded from the indiscriminate hospitality of that mansion, would have been ignominy indeed. Homer and Virgil, Ovid and Lucan, Statius and Claudian, are found there in the society of Dares Phrygius and Lollius, Guido of Colonna and Geoffrey of Monmouth. But there is no iron pillar for Lucretius. As the Gothic age is left behind, he is still more conspicuous by his absence. The most important poem of Henry the Sixth's reign was Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. The illustrious shades who recite their catastrophes continually quote the classics: but they quote only Virgil or Ovid, Lucan or Statius. Their reverses never recall the language of him who from his "heights built up by the learning of the wise" looked down on Vanity Fair. And a curious indication that at the beginning of the sixteenth century Lucretius was absolutely unknown in England is afforded by a quaint poem of Skelton's, tutor to the future Henry VIII. Erasmus has termed Skelton "*Britannicarum literarum decus et lumen*." In the *Crown of Laurel* Pallas holds a levée. The learned of all nations attend. Modern France and Italy, perhaps from national jealousy, are thinly represented. But of all writers whatever in the shape or semblance of classics there is an unrivalled muster. Ennius and Lucilius appear in their rags among the glossy compilers of mediæval tomes. Macrobius happens to quote a few lines from one Pisander. Pisander himself is not permitted to shirk. The absence of Lucretius, who might have drawn near with some seven thousand hexameters in his hand, forcibly suggests the inference that this distinguished scholar had not heard of him. Meanwhile in Italy, Marullus, after Politian the first scholar of the age, had made the *De Rerum Natura* the idol-

study of his later years. The editio princeps had been published at Brescia in 1473. A more intelligent edition was brought out by Aldus in 1500. The important edition of Giunta appeared in 1513. It cannot be supposed that the *De Rerum Natura* was much longer quite unknown in England. But, while in Italy Lucretius was dividing with Virgil the allegiance of verse-writing cardinals, England continued to ignore the elder poet. Before 1600 almost all the best classics had been done into English. But Spenser's tame paraphrase of the Invocation to Venus is the sole trace of Lucretius in the Elizabethan age. From the first line of the *Eclogues* to the last line of the *Æneid* the language and thought of Lucretius are constantly imitated. Yet Roger Ascham speaks of Ennius and Plautus as the only Latin models possessed by Virgil. Creech's translation of the *De Rerum Natura* appeared in 1695. If good sense and good taste were the only qualities required in a translator, his version would be excellent. But there is an irony which he knew not, and a pathos with which he did not intermeddle. In the last century and a half of our literature Wordsworth's sympathy with Lucretius stands alone. A special cause has recently interfered with the popularity of Lucretius in Germany. In that country Heraclitus is no longer the Obscure. The Ephesian came into the hands of his German expositors as Enid came to Guinevere, in dimness and weeds. He leaves them as Enid left the queen's dressing-room at Caerleon, appalled like the day. Now the physical doctrines of Heraclitus merged in the philosophy of the Porch, as the physical doctrines of Democritus merged in the philosophy of the Garden. Hence Heraclitus receives no quarter from Lucretius, and Lucretius meets with slight courtesy in modern Germany. But even in Germany he has had his illustrious admirers. Heyne and Jacobs, indeed, were content to compliment Wakefield on a confused and turgid commentary. But the fugitive criticisms of Madvig and Bernays led up to the brilliant per-

formance which employed the last five years of Lachmann's life. Lessing consigned Lucretius to the outer darkness where Pope jabbers metaphysics in verse which can never be poetry. But Goethe knew kindred genius in the spirit of the Invocation, in the eager sympathy with nature which strove to anticipate science, to wrest the secrets of the storm and the earthquake, to tread Acheron under foot in the mere strength of an intrepid mind.

The reception accorded to Lucretius in modern times is a good commentary on his life and writings. His attitude towards the age in which he lived was one of utter isolation. With the Epicureans of his day he had little in common but the name. He had nearly as much in common with the Stoics. But his philosophy, while it partook of each system, was distinct from both. His life appears to have been as solitary as his thought. In the poetry of that age, a poetry which has immortalized so many friendships, which exhibits such frequent traces of his influence, his name occurs not once. Catullus is silent. Virgil borrows and makes no sign. The name of Lucretius never falls from Horace in his chatty criticisms. The form of Lucretius graces none of those reunions in Elysium which the elegiac poets delighted to imagine. All that is known of the life of Lucretius is contained in two short sentences. Each of those sentences was written about four hundred years after his death. Donatus says that Lucretius died on the day when Virgil, at fifteen, assumed the toga virilis. This fixes the death of Lucretius to 55 B.C. Jerome, in his additions to the chronicle of Eusebius, assigns the birth of Lucretius to 95 B.C. and states that he was driven mad by a love-potion; that he composed in his lucid intervals several books which Cicero afterwards revised; and that he died by his own hand in his 44th year. This fixes the death of Lucretius to 51 B.C. But Donatus fixes it to 55 B.C. Donatus is probably right. There is little doubt that both Donatus and Jerome drew their facts from the lost *De Viris Illustribus* of Suetonius,

a painstaking biographer. The facts of each, then, are probably correct. Donatus is probably right in saying that Lucretius died when Virgil was fifteen, and Jerome is right in saying that Lucretius died at forty-four. An oversight by Jerome or his copyists may have assigned the poet's birth to the wrong year in the chronicle. It may be concluded that Lucretius was born in 99 B.C. and died in 55 B.C.

But was the *De Rerum Natura* written in lucid intervals? It appears highly probable that this tradition arose in early Christian times. During the first nine centuries of the Christian era the ancient classics, instead of being prized as authors, were merely abhorred as pagans. The Latin writers of the late empire were popular principally because they were Christians. Boëthius had the advantage of being edited by two bishops and translated by a subdean. Orosius, in the 5th century, wrote *Historiarum Libros VII. "adversus paganos,"* and became a classic. Prudentius and Sedulius were the favourite poets. Bede is careful to indicate the difference between himself and Virgil:—"Let Virgil sing of wars: I celebrate the gifts of peace. I will chant heavenly blessings, not the battles of miserable Troy." Around the name of a heathen poet whose theme was eternal death and whose life had no echo in its time, fancies of gloom and horror would arise. The spell which worked madness where it sought to work love, the quenched reason which glimmered only in fitful blasphemies, the self-destruction which cut those ravings short,—this was a doom which may well have been conceived by the fourth century for one whom it regarded as given over to the powers of darkness. But does the *De Rerum Natura* support this story by any internal evidence? De Quincey thinks that it does. In the pervading fervour of the poem, he recognises the morbid strain of a mind verging to madness. "It might be urged "on the other hand," Professor Sellar observes, "that the power of sustained "feeling and consistent thought which "the poem manifests in a remarkable

"degree is rather the evidence of sanity "of genius and strength of understanding." In one point of view this is most true. But we venture to suggest that another argument for the poet's sanity may be derived from a different consideration. A mind diseased loses its elasticity. When it is not at high pressure it is nerveless. Its spring is broken. Excitement propels it furiously in the direction of its morbid bent. But the power to regulate its activity, to pause, to enjoy the beauties of the route, to gather the flowers in the path, is gone. To blend doctrine and illustration, vehemence and pathos, to be grave or gay, stern or gentle in due season, but to keep one aim steadily in view through all,—it is this that a morbid mind cannot do. And this is precisely what Lucretius does. The argument to prove that the first beginnings are of several different shapes, that

"No compound of this earthly ball  
Is like another all in all,"

glides into that touching picture of bereavement, the mother seeking her slaughtered youngling through the pastures, recognising the footprints, moaning as she abandons the search of the woods, and goes back heartbroken to the thrice-searched stall. The chaos that would ensue if the atoms of each shape were not infinitely numerous suggests the description of the morning after a gale,—the heaving sea strewn for leagues with floating spars of wrecks. The doctrine that, the more powers a thing possesses, the greater is the variety of its elements, introduces the stately pageant of the Idæan Mother, in whom, while the roses fall like snow and the cymbals of the Curetes clash, the Phrygian cities adore the powers of Earth.

If the *De Rerum Natura* affords no evidence of its author's alleged insanity, it affords some evidence that his death was premature. Like Lucilius, like Calvus and Catullus, he died in early manhood. He lived, indeed, to solve in his own way the enigma of the universe and the enigma of the soul. As an argument the poem is complete.

As a work of art it is manifestly incomplete. Many passages occur twice; some passages occur again and again. There is an unfulfilled promise to describe the abodes of the gods. The sixth book ends abruptly. Lachmann has shown that whole paragraphs were marginal additions, which the author did not live to incorporate. Mr. Munro extends the theory to several misplaced groups of two or three verses each. These marginal additions were inserted very much at random by the first editor.

Was Cicero that editor, as Jerome asserts? Cicero mentions Lucretius only once. Writing to Quintus, about four months after the poet's death, he says: "The poems of Lucretius, as you say, do not show many flashes of genius, but show a good deal of art." There is some doubt about the reading. But one thing is clear. Lucretius is dismissed in a dozen cold words. We find it difficult to get over this fact. Few things gratified the orator more than an appeal to his criticism. A friend sends him a book or an essay. He incubates upon it, weighs each phrase, perhaps admires a particular word, and has a revulsion of feeling with regard to it days afterwards. Atticus in an essay had used the phrase "*inhibere remos*," under the impression that it meant "to cease rowing," as a metaphor for suspension of judgment. Cicero applauds the metaphor. But some days afterwards a trireme puts in near his villa. He notices that by "*inhibere remos*" sailors mean "to back water." He hastens to inform Atticus that the metaphor has forfeited his esteem. "*Valde arriserat—vehementer displicet.*" Brutus sends Cicero a speech to revise for publication. Allusions to this speech run through five letters to Atticus. If Cicero had been requested by Atticus or Memmius to edit a poem which Catullus, Virgil, Horace, Ovid were afterwards not ashamed to study, a poem in which editorial scrutiny would have detected more than twenty distinct imitations of his own *Aratea*, would he have dismissed it with a slighting commonplace? Or if Lucretius had bequeathed his elaborate work to the first

critic of the day, was it like Cicero to have made no mention of a tribute so flattering? In the tradition that makes Cicero the editor of Lucretius it is perhaps enough to recognise the instinct that delights in grouping illustrious names, an instinct to which fact and fiction are equally acceptable, which dwells with the same uncritical pleasure on Thucydides moved to tears by Herodotus reciting at Olympia, on Attius reading his Atreus to Pacuvius, on Sulla discerning "many Mariuses" in the "dissipated boy," on Chaucer meeting Froissart and Petrarch at the Duke of Clarence's wedding, on Erasmus crying out to More "Aut tu Morus es aut nullus," and More responding, "Aut tu Erasmus es aut diabolus," on Voiture criticising Bossuet's juvenile sermon, on Mendelssohn playing to Goethe, on Havellöck remembered as "the philosopher" by his old schoolfellow Thackeray.

The *De Rerum Natura* is dedicated to Gaius Memmius. His is the only name which links Lucretius with the life of his day. It is strange to turn from Lucretius to Catullus. Memmius was the gay poet's *bête noire*, as he was the philosopher's hero. History shows that Catullus was not far wrong. Originally a partisan of the senate, Memmius had distinguished himself in 59 B.C. by his resistance to the Cabal. Four months before the poet's death, his friend had not only changed sides, but had signalled the step by a memorable bargain. Memmius and Domitius wanted the consulship for 54 B.C. Pompeius wanted Spain. Crassus wanted Syria. Pompeius and Crassus promise their support at the election. Memmius and Domitius give a bond that they will produce three augurs, item two senators, prepared to perjure themselves with regard to the assignment of the provinces. "Que de mal-honnêtes gens," observes Montesquieu, "dans un seul contrat!" At the instance of Pompeius, Memmius discloses the transaction, and is banished. Five years later Cicero, on his way to Cilicia, spends a few days at Athens. The philosophers of the Garden could still point

to the crumbling walls within which, more than two centuries before, their master had gracefully awaited the dispersion of his component atoms. But these premises had come into the possession of Memmius: and Memmius, though he did not want them, would not give them up. Cicero intercedes. His letter is curious from its exquisite blandness. It indicates how vividly he realized the possibility of a refusal. He is careful to sneer at Epicureanism. "We have no especial grudge against persons whom such trifles amuse." "Atticus, too, urges the request—not that he is one of that set."

It is singular to reflect that this letter and the *De Rerum Natura* were addressed to the same person. When the accomplished hero of Sir E. L. Bulwer's novel leaves the October meeting at Newmarket to visit his less favoured friend in the neighbourhood, he patronises him strictly within the limits of amiability. It is not difficult to imagine Memmius improving a similar occasion. It is October, 60 B.C. Memmius has obtained his *legatio libera*, the honorary leave of absence granted to senators, and has left Rome on a visit to Bibulus, consul designate. But the host is addicted to explaining how Cæsar is to be extinguished next year, and Calpurnia has praised Cæsar's eyes. Memmius thinks that he will go over and see Lucretius. With the trustfulness of friendship he is prepared to take the poet's word for the charm of simple luxuries. It is therefore about a quarter to three P.M., when the early *cœna* will probably be over, that his four Cappadocians in the russet livery of bearers set him down at the plain porch among the Apennines. A plump Italian slave comes to the door. Before the rustic has assembled his wits Memmius has observed that the bronze stove burns ruddily in the atrium, though no sleek Lares twinkle in the glow. In a small recess on the left side of the door he sees a large pair of spurs, rather rusty, a fishing rod, and a cloak hung up to dry. The master is at the elms: he took his *cœna* there at the eighth hour.

Memmius throws his cape to the slave, and turns along a narrow gravel path through the garden. Most senators were not sorry to exchange toga and red shoes for the grey tunic with the broad purple stripe and the sandals usually worn in the country. Memmius wears a Greek mantle of amethyst colour, fastened on the right shoulder by a gold brooch. His soft Greek slippers are of a violet hue. On the little finger of his left hand the gold ring of his order is perhaps a shade larger than was usual. He glances around him, and misses such refinements as were then coming into vogue,—yews, box-trees and cypresses clipped into wild beasts and monograms. There are only some clumps of planes, and a few laurels and myrtles dotting the lawn. Presently he approaches the poet's retreat. He can see the shadows from a ring of tall elms changing upon a circle of bright grass. At the further end, the turf climbs into a mossy bank. A marble Naiad intercepts a rill with her jug, and pours it into a marble basin. Lucretius has rushed to welcome him. Has he dined? Will he take a cup of Surrentine? (glancing uneasily at the Naiad. What will Memmius think of a graven image?) A Crustumian pear? They walk about. The remains of a repast of leeks, pulse and fritters, flanked by a Campanian jug and bowl, stand on a small round table in the shade. The poet's looks do not belie his fare. The face is thin and the features sharp; but the eyes and mouth are scarcely those of a dull ascetic. It strikes Memmius that the man's tunic is preposterously short: it is like a centurion's. "This is a pretty little spot," remarks Memmius, kindly. "You must feel the want of society." "Society! when I have only to cross my threshold to be with Nature! When I have the river-bank, with its delicate willows—the divine calm of the mountains—the great bays strewn with shells—the smile of the sunshine, the glory—" "Is *that* straight?" Memmius inquires, half turning his back. When a mantle slipped down behind, it was not easy to set it right over the shoulder. "Quite," replies

Lucretius—his first insincerity in thirty-nine years. "What a beautiful brooch." "I should like you to see one that Calpurnia—but my ancestress Venus forbid! The fact is, I have taken to sonnets instead of speaking in the house. Cæsar did not like it, though he carried it off very well. By-the-bye, I am thinking of attempting something in your line, a philosophical poem—only, what with the despatches, and then giving Bibulus his daily beating at draughts—" He was speaking to the rocks of Icarus. Lucretius did not hear a syllable. The sunlight was dancing in a rainbow on the amethystine mantle. How can any one deny that colour is a secondary property of matter? That evening Bibulus was regaled with the history of the visit to the philosopher: but elsewhere the moonlight fell on a waxen tablet, and a gleaming stilus wrote—

Quem tu, dea, tempore in omni  
Omnibus ornatum voluisti excellere rebus.

If Lucretius lived apart from the society of his day, the *De Rerum Natura* had as little in common with its literature. A generation of sonneteers had arisen, whose models were the affected Alexandrian writers. From the nature of the case Italian Hellenism had always been cosmopolitan rather than Attic. But the Ennian school at least copied a living dialect. If Euripides was radical in thought, in language he was superlatively Attic. Menander was the Merlin of the spell. He was the last enchanter who had power to compel the magic harmonies, and to him the power was not given in its fullness. The Alexandrian writers were pretenders to a secret irrevocably lost. But the frigid pedantry of this school was congenial to the sonneteers of a borrowed literature. The Greeks of Hadrian's time pronounced that Calvus and Catullus were the only Romans who had approached Anacreon. Yet even Catullus is not entirely exempt from the influence of Euphorion and Callimachus. From this taint Lucretius is absolutely free. His more than Roman earnestness, his sym-



pathy so foreign to the Roman temper with the speculative passion of early Greece, sustained him in a higher atmosphere. When he borrows Greek poetry it is from Homer or Euripides. It would perhaps be difficult to overrate the importance of this example to the aftercourse of Latin poetry. In the *De Rerum Natura* Virgil may have found a talisman against the "cantores Euphorionis," as in the *Divine Comedy* Alfieri found a talisman against the pedantic copiers of Petrarch. But Lucretius was not content with avoiding the besetting vice of the contemporary style. His whole manner is designedly antique. Ennius was his master and exemplar. The archaic type of the poem may be gauged by comparing Cicero's earlier and later hexameters. The *Aratea* was written about 90 B.C. It has some peculiar rhythms in common with the *Annals* and the *De Rerum Natura*. The *De Consulatu suo* was written in 61 B.C., about the time when Lucretius was beginning to write. But the licences found in the earlier poem are not admitted in the later. The advance of the new taste had modified the orator's Ennian creed. It had only thrown Lucretius into more and more scornful nonconformity. Instances of the spondaic endings then becoming fashionable occur in every book of his poem except the last. His muse had lighted upon evil days. She took refuge in a haughty anachronism, and walked among tinsel and spangles in the plain stole of the militant republic. It was thus that early English satire loved to ransack the old Saxon wardrobes. The same reign that produced the *Canterbury Tales* produced also *Peter Ploughman's Vision*, in which Conscience conducts an alliterative debate with Simony in the idiom of three centuries back. But the quaintness of Lucretius never passes into grotesqueness. It serves only to point his isolation, to place him in formal contact with the elder Rome of which he inherited the spirit, to draw him nearer to the Ionian dawn of which no other Roman caught the freshness.

The Greeks spoke of Dionysus passing in a triumphal progress from continent to continent, with the thyrsus in his hand and the ivy on his brow, radiant in the beauty of his immortal youth, a giver of all gladness and exuberance. Everywhere at the touch of the god's wand the dry places gush with milk and wine, and the desert begins to laugh and sing. The progress has never been arrested. From one age to another the beneficent idealism of Greece has travelled in a perpetual ovation. Every language has responded to the genial presence, in every literature new forms have been quickened by its virtue. Even at Rome, from the days of *Æmilius Paulus*, the plastic charm of Greek art was never without a witness. But the grave genius of Rome could not soar to the spiritual heights of Greece. There was an Athenian legend that the goddess had banished all crows from her Acropolis. Colonel Leake tells us that he saw crows wheeling round the base, but noticed that they seldom rose to the summit. The Roman muse was in the predicament of the crows. She was always hovering over the Theatre of Dionysus. But the ban of Athene was upon her. She never floated level with the Parthenon. Perhaps the "templa serena" of Lucretius formed the highest ledge that her flagging pinion touched.

In modern times the *De Rerum Natura* is read, not as a treatise, but merely as a poem. In one point of view, indeed, it is a curiosity in the history of thought. No extant work so vigorously embodies the spirit of ancient physical research—the eager scrutiny of Nature's surface without a suspicion of anything beneath, the effort to seize the world-problem at a glance, the utter disregard of experiment. But the particular dogmas have no interest for the nineteenth century. With Lucretius, of course, the case was exactly the reverse. Poetry was subservient to philosophy. To use his own illustration, it was the honey with which children must be bribed to take the wormwood. "There was a time," he says, "when all flesh crouched and cowered before a face

that looked out from heaven. A Greek was the first to lift his eyes and confront the appalling malignity of Superstition. The thunders rolled and the lightnings fell: but unharmed, because intrepid, he passed beyond the wall of the empyrean, and returned with Knowledge. Perhaps Memmius thinks that physical inquiry is impious. Impious! Has Superstition no impieties? That grim travestie of the nuptial rite at Aulis, when the daughter before the father's eyes was carried shivering to the altar, not that she might be escorted from it by the clear bridal song, but that she die in her stainless maidenhood—who sanctioned that? Nothing can be produced out of nothing, nor can anything be annihilated. All things come from atoms and void. Does Memmius find it hard to conceive invisible atoms? Do we hear the wind that beats on harbours and sinks huge ships? Are not the hands of the brazen statues at the gates of towns imperceptibly worn away by the kisses of saluting multitudes? The universe is infinite. For, if it be finite, go to its verge, and, like the Roman herald declaring war, launch a spear over the border. If it is stopped, then the obstacle is in the universe. If it goes on, then it is space that allows it to go on. Through infinite time and space the atoms have tried all possible combinations. Some atoms are still vagrant and unattached. When sun-rays pour through the dark nooks of houses, troops of motes are seen skirmishing in endless conflict, battling in troops, encountering, receding. Even such is the quiet doom of atoms. Their velocity is unspeakable. Does not sunlight clothe the earth in a moment? But the atoms, unlike sunlight, have no waves of air to cleave, and do not travel in masses. The motion of the atoms is downward, even as meteors, as sun-rays tend to earth, even as lightnings fly athwart the rains. And like rain would the atoms fall, but for an inherent power by which alone they can break the laws of Fate. At uncertain times and at uncertain points in space they swerve a

little from their equal poise. It is this clinamen alone that enables them to combine. What but this could break the chain of endless causation? How has that power been wrested from Fate, by which motions well through the limbs? When the barriers in the circus are thrown open, the eager horses do not at once fall into their stride. Blows and weight cannot be the only causes of motion. There must be free will too, and free will is due to the minute swervings of first-beginnings. The fear of death is the root of all evil. But there is no life after death. Body and soul cannot be severed without mutual destruction. Do not mind and body grow together? Do not they suffer together? And cannot the soul be divided? A scythed chariot takes off a soldier's shield-arm. The severed limb quivers on the ground. The soldier is absorbed in fighting, and goes on. So the soul has been divided. But the divisible is mortal. Death has nothing to do with us. It concerns us not a jot. The belief in a future state is derived from the phantoms seen in sleep. Images, thin as films, are incessantly streaming from all surfaces. Does not the cicada doff its gossamer coat, and the serpent slip its vesture among the thorns? Such an image of the dead appears to the mind in sleep. Hence the belief in a life beyond the grave. Our world was not the handiwork of the gods. Memmius must eschew the baneful doctrine of final causes. We were not given our eyes that we might see: we see because we have eyes. If the world was the result of design, why have hoe and plough to keep down thorns? Why do diseases and death stalk abroad? No: the world is the result of that strange and stormy crisis, the premundane conflict of the atoms. The equipoise of destruction and renovation alone holds it together. And, knowing this, shall we be scared like children in the dark by the thunder or the flash, by earthquake or volcano, by the strange malevolence of pestilent miasma, by the manifold disguises of death? If Jupiter

sends the thunder, why does the flash precede the peal? Surely it would have been more considerate to make the peal give warning of the flash. Why does he send us his lightning on the wilderness or the sea? It is true that they afford an admirable range for bolt practice. But why are his numerous friends and supporters so frequently singled? Then it is singular that he recently amused a few seconds by demolishing his own grey temple on the Capitol. In the earthquake, again, are we to recognise the trident? When Bura and Helice, cities of Achaia, went down quick into the earth, and the triremes moored off the coast were engulfed, was that Poseidon? Beneath the earth's surface there may well be a region of stormy caverns. Ever and anon these caverns fall in, and the cities of men are shaken: or the winds that chafe through them break forth to rend the crust on which we walk. Our fathers speak of a time when silent watchers at Rhegium looked into the blackness of the south, and in the great darkness hanging over Sicily saw only the lurid cone of Etna. Was that Vulcan's work? Or is it conceivable that the mountain may rest on honeycombed basalt, that these corridors may be swept by winds, that these winds may strike fire from the rocks, and hurl it through the gorges of the crater? There are places which men call Avernian, because they are haunted by some mysterious influence inimical to life. There is a lake near Cumæ whose vapours arrest birds on the wing. There is a place in Syria called Plutonia. The living thing that touches its deadly circle drops felled like a black sheep to the Manes. Are these places indeed the Gates of Hell? Can the spirits infernal draw down men as a stag's breath draws a viper from its hole? Earth is composed of atoms deadly as well as healthful to man. There are natural poisons as well as natural tonics. In natural laws we must seek the causes of disease. Disease is generated by the gathering of particles which distemper the air. Different

maladies infect different climates. But diseases can travel. Thus travelled the plague from Egypt to Attica. Then the heart began to die within the ulcered flesh, and the spirit of healing was blanched with inarticulate fear. Then the carrion was spread in vain to the foul birds for whom Athens was too foul, till the temples were packed and the wells choked, and the dying, laden with the dead, were wrangling for the pyres."

So ends the *De Rerum Natura*.

The Epicureanism of Lucretius stood out in austere contrast to the Epicureanism of his day. But Dr. Mommsen's remark, that "Roman Epicureanism was mainly a mask in which thoughtless sensuality dressed itself out for good society," though true of the Lucilian epoch, must be applied with large deductions to the Ciceronian epoch. The tottering Republic was indeed a Castle of Despair from which the purest of its captives might well have been content to be led forth by Pleasure, not Pleasure as she flaunted at Corinth, but Pleasure as she walked in the Athenian Garden. Epicureanism in its origin was not sensuality rampant, it was merely Athens hopeless and resigned. When, in the 30th year from the extinction of Greek freedom Epicurus settled at Athens, a generation of slaves had already sprung up. Few of the Athenians who in that year received the son of Antigonus as he alighted in the agora on the spot thenceforth sacred to Demetrius the Descender, had felt their ears tingle to the Fourth Philippic. During the life of Epicurus, a period of seventy years, Athens was twice besieged. In each instance a Macedonian tyrant held the city against a Macedonian rival. Demus might be pardoned if his first love for the Pnyx had grown cold. Nor was it easy longer to idealise the national religion, when an alien destined to shorten his days by intemperance had been lodged in the Parthenon and initiated into the Great Mysteries in April. The glory had departed. But there remained the groves of the Academy, the chatty arcades of the Gymna-

sium, the summer picnic under the planes of the Ilissus, the lazy enjoyments of the Eubœan spa, statue-hunting and quail-fighting, cottabus and riddles. Life could no longer be brilliant, but it might be innocently pleasant. How could it be made as pleasant as possible? "By expelling," replied the philosophers of the Garden, "everything that produces tumult in the soul,—fear, passion, inordinate desire, the hope of immortality, the dread of an everlasting doom, all lust, all ambition, every feeling that tends to become paramount. The wise man will of course abstain from politics." This last precept carries its date upon its face. Epicureanism had consoled the nullity of Athens, and was yet to mitigate the despair of Rome. Cicero's days were the beginning of the end. The long war of capital against the middle class was over. Capital, of course, had triumphed. One of two things remained for Rome—an oligarchy or a tyranny; and there was slight chance of an oligarchy. Nothing in Cicero's political life is more surprising than his genuine unconsciousness of the Roman dilemma. When Cæsar crossed the Rubicon, Cicero had not yet recognised in him the nemesis of three centuries, the inevitable, the wholesome despot. And yet it was a sense of this very dilemma that a century before had fettered one of Rome's most sagacious patriots, Scipio Æmilianus. This was the dilemma that sent such men as Atticus to an adopted country, that made Epicureans of such men as Cassius and Pansa, Trebatius and Paetus. Cicero believed in the "harmony of the orders," and adhered to Stoicism. The theory of that philosophy as taught in the last days of the Republic may be found in the Tusculan Disputations. Its practical value is illustrated by the Letters from Thessalonica. In remoteness from more sensuality the Epicureanism of Lucretius differed little, perhaps, from the Epicureanism of clear minds hopeless for the state. But it was infinitely more earnest. Cassius and Trebatius were cultivated Sadducees, who com-

pounded for a dignified equanimity by abjuring diviner solitudes. Lucretius was one for whom the eternal blank to come lent a busier meaning to the present, in whom the most genial sympathies were alloyed only by a scorn for self-enslavement, who felt with a buoyancy almost Greek the instinct that claims a second life, while he accepted with more than Roman fortitude the gospel of everlasting death.

The philosophy of Lucretius, when it confronted the future, was majestic, stern, defiant. But when it turned to the present it knew how to assume a light and sunny aspect, an aspect which has ever been its most winning charm. The sympathy with what is beautiful and joyous in external nature has in Lucretius more freshness and reality than in any other ancient writer. It has been more than once remarked that the attitude of antiquity generally towards the pathetic fallacy is expressed in a single Homeric epithet. Helen, standing at the Scean Gates, looks in vain among the warriors of Greece for the godlike forms of the Dioscuri. Her brothers are in their graves in Lacedæmon.

τοὺς δ' ἦδη κατέχε φυσίχοος αἶα.

Earth, "quickenings" Earth, had taken them to her arms. In the very hour when she entombs, Earth is still nothing more to the bereaved than the callous mother of trees and plants. No passing shiver of sympathy with human anguish can ruffle the sleekness of her prolific apathy. The intercourse between the Greek mind and Nature was generally cold, matter-of-fact, business-like. From the leeks in the Dutch garden of Alcinous down to Plato's tea-garden by the Ilissus, almost everything that the Greeks appreciated in external nature was esteemed because it was comfortable to sit upon, pleasant to smell, soothing to listen to, or good to eat. Mr. E. M. Cope, in his interesting essay on this subject, has indicated the affinity in this respect between modern France and ancient Greece. M. Jannin's pæan on emerging from the Splügen into a

land of hotels was exquisitely Greek. Sophocles might well have felt the rising rapture of those sentences,—“Et cette fois, vivat! Vous avez échappé à la Suisse déserte, vous entrez dans la Suisse habitée! Les chalets commencent!” When Roman language was married to Greek verse, the bride was not wealthy, but she was not portionless. She brought into that elaborate town-house her simple Italian heirloom, the power of enjoying country life. Perhaps this national characteristic has never been brought out so vividly and with so little false colouring as in Mr. Hawthorne's novel of Transformation. The mysterious brotherhood with the Faun of the Capitol which is so charming in Donatello has peeped out in every recorded phase of Italian life, from the Lucretian shepherd amid his “otia dia” to the Tuscan contadino of to-day. It was well for Roman poetry that not one of its great masters could have anticipated the boast of Juvenal. Not one of them could exult in the thought that his childhood had inhaled the air of the Aventine. In the epitaph written by Nævius for himself Gellius detected the arrogance of a Campanian. Ennius himself tells us that he was cradled among the Calabrian hills. Pacuvius grew up at Brundisium. Attius, a native of Umbria, may have derived his first tragic inspiration from the crag of Nequinum scowling on the waters of Nar. Lucilius was “Aurunca's mighty son.” Catullus may have mused his first lyrics by the Adige that flows past his native Verona. It was not to Rome, but to Mantua, that Virgil brought home the Idumean palm. In most of these instances, indeed, the native Italian sentiment was alloyed by later influences. Ennius teaching grammar on the Aventine, Pacuvius subsisting at Rome by his paintings or his plays, Attius the intimate of Brutus Galliaicus, were in contact with inspirations anything but pastoral. No

Latin poet had so much of the Æolic spirit as Catullus. Precisely for that reason no Latin poet displays more rarely the Italian spirit which loves Nature for her own sake. Virgil was too much of a conscious artist to be a genuine Italian. In unreality and in confusion of localities the Eclogues are worthy of Rousseau. Cicero felt the Italian instinct. But his sympathy with external nature was not the deep communion with a presence in which cares are hushed. The fears and sorrows of the perishing Republic came between. Writing from Antium in the autumn of 46 B.C. he says: “Nothing can be pleasanter than this solitude.... Nothing can be more charming than the sea-shore, the sea view.... But the subject does not warrant a longer letter.” And, writing from Puteoli in the spring of 44 B.C.:—“You ask me—you suppose I cannot tell—whether I most enjoy the view from the rising ground or the walk by the sea-shore. I am not sure which deserves the palm.

ἀλλ' οὐ δαῖτ' ἐπηράτου ἔργα μέμνηται.”

He had no appetite for the banquet. Lucretius, who viewed the succession of nations as a torch-race, could feast unvexed by political despair. His isolation speculative and social was solaced by a double portion of the genial gift. And, while he was spared a sense of horror in the night which was descending upon Rome, his native earnestness was indirectly deepened, his vigour stimulated, by the solemnity and the energy of the crisis. The *De Rerum Natura* exhibits the general influence of a stirring period on a susceptible re-cluse. The same combination recurred at the end of the last century, and again produced a contemplative poem of the first order. A broad human concern in the effects of the French Revolution was intensifying the earnest temper of Wordsworth when the *Excursion* was written among the Westmoreland lakes.



## THE BANK CHARTER ACT OF 1844.

BY LORD HOBART.

THAT men should be allowed to trade with each other on whatever terms and to whatever extent they please, and that no commercial transaction ought to be prohibited or restricted on the ground that it may be so carried on as to inflict loss upon those concerned in it, is a general rule of political science the disregard of which has wrought in its time incalculable evil, but which during the last twenty years has been sufficiently recognised in this country. It is now generally understood, in England at least, that the proper remedy for the evils occasioned by the breach of commercial engagements is not to prevent or limit them, but to pass such laws as may be most expedient in case they are unfulfilled. The interference of the State with respect to the metallic currency of the country can scarcely be considered as an exception to this rule. It is an interference, not to prevent or limit the particular kind of commercial transaction to which it applies, but in order that the transaction may be really what it professes to be. It imposes no limitation or condition whatever upon the use of metallic money, except that of manufacture by the State. It is an exception, based on considerations of peculiar cogency, to the maxim "caveat emptor," rather than to the principle of free-trade. The only direct and positive instance of any great and general interest in which the rule is now set aside, is that which is afforded by the monetary legislation of 1844.

It must be confessed that this legislation (which, applicable in the first instance only to England, was extended in the following year to Scotland and Ireland) is as vigorous as it is singular. The original intention appears to have been to permit the issue of notes, under

severe restrictions, by the Bank of England alone. As it was, the Bank of England was prohibited from issuing notes to an amount exceeding 14,000,000*l.* beyond that of the coin or bullion in its coffers, except in so far as they were substituted for those of any country bank which were no longer in circulation, of which such substitution (limited to two-thirds of the lapsed issue) the whole profit was to be made over to the State; and no such issue was permitted at all except upon securities, of which the debt due to the Bank by the Government (11,000,000*l.*) was to form a part. The issue of notes other than those of the banks of issue then existing was made illegal; and, except the Bank of England, no bank was to increase its circulation beyond the amount at which it then stood. Power was taken by the Government to deprive any bank of the privilege of issue; a maximum of six was fixed beyond which no addition to the number of partners in any private bank possessing that privilege could take place; and other vexatious restrictions were imposed<sup>1</sup>—the intention evidently being that the whole paper circulation of the country should ultimately be in the hands of the Bank of England. Thus a monopoly of issue was given to certain banks, not one of which, except the Bank of England, could be supposed to have even the shadow of a claim to such treatment, and it was in effect enacted that no bank, except those so favoured, however great might be its wealth, and however admirable its management, should in future be al-

<sup>1</sup> A Bill has been proposed to Parliament in the present Session, by which relief from some of these regulations is offered, on certain conditions, to country banks, but which is not intended to alter, in any essential respect, the effect of the Bank Charter Act.

lowed to issue notes. Thus also it was provided that, whatever might be the increase in the wealth and metallic circulation of the country, there could be no increase at all in the note circulation of country banks, and no increase in that of the Bank of England unless with a corresponding decrease of the proportion borne by the amount of notes which it might issue to that of its metallic reserve. Two distinct and formidable weapons—monopoly and restriction—were brought into play against a most important branch of commercial business, by a Minister who, it is as well to remember, was not yet converted to free-trade. And, when to this statement of the effect of the Act it is added that on two out of the three occasions of serious commercial difficulty which have occurred since it was passed, the Act was suspended on the unanimous demand of the trading classes, few will be found to deny that a *prima facie* case of singular force has been established against it. The measure was not only a departure from an economic principle of admitted soundness and extreme importance, but a very wide and evident departure from that principle; and it has been found intolerable in the very circumstances with a view to which it was adopted. Right or wrong, a heavy burden of proof unquestionably rests upon its supporters.

Now, what are the grounds upon which an enactment so extraordinary and exceptional was proposed and is defended? Two principal reasons were given for it by the more moderate and judicious of its advocates, one of which may be summarily dismissed. This was, that the calamity commonly known as a "commercial crisis" is seriously aggravated by the stimulus given to the undue speculation which is a frequent cause of such a phenomenon, as well as to the "drain of gold," which usually accompanies it, by the unrestricted issue of bank notes. It is obvious that this statement, whatever amount of truth it may contain, affords no ground whatever for a measure such as that under consideration. It will hardly now be

contended that the evils, however great, which mercantile insolvency inflicts upon the country are of a kind to justify an exceptional violation of the great law of unrestricted trade. The time is gone by for preventing commercial enterprise from becoming ruinous by legislative limitation of the means employed for carrying it on. If the object was to prevent or mitigate commercial failures, there could be no better justification for restricting the amount of notes than there is for restricting the amount of bills of exchange or other mercantile obligations, a course which no one has ever been bold enough to propose. The more plausible ground upon which banks were subjected to the legislation of 1844 was of a different kind. It was represented by the authors of the measure that on several occasions, when the country had been suffering from monetary derangement, the proportion between the notes issued and the cash held by bankers had become such as to endanger, and, in the case of many country banks, actually to destroy the convertibility of the note, causing great and wide-spread disaster; and that the importance of averting for the future any danger of the kind was such as required a resort to extraordinary and special legislation.<sup>1</sup> Another effect which is very commonly attributed to and held to justify the measure does not require any serious consideration. It is supposed by many persons that the Act, by limiting the circulation of notes, prevents their being issued (as it is termed) "in excess," that is, to such an amount as to induce more or less depreciation and consequent disaster. The fallacy of this supposition has been sufficiently shown. It is now well understood that the depreciation of a convertible paper currency, so long as

<sup>1</sup> A third reason for the Act, of the same character as the first, and therefore inadmissible, was given by Sir Robert Peel in his speech of December 1847 on Commercial Distress, viz. the expectation that the Act would prevent "by early and gradual, severe and sudden contraction;" but he mentioned it only to admit that the expectation had been disappointed.

its convertibility is maintained, is impossible; since on the very first symptom of such depreciation it becomes profitable to exchange the notes for gold. So long as the notes are duly cashed when presented for payment, there can be no fall in their value such as that supposed, and the only discredit to which they can be liable is of that complete and final kind which follows the refusal of their issuers to convert them.

Thus in discussing the expediency of the Bank Charter Act we shall be warranted in assuming that the evil which it is intended to avert, and as a remedy for which it can alone with any show of reason be defended, is simply a recurrence in times of serious commercial difficulty of that danger to the convertibility of the note by which such periods are considered to have been characterized. Nor can it be denied that the evil thus apprehended has peculiar features which afford, if not a perfectly satisfactory, at least a plausible ground for treating it as an exception to general principle. The disasters caused by the failure of mercantile credit and the depreciation of mercantile paper are serious enough. Probably indeed they involve an actual loss of property quite as great as any which is occasioned by the insolvency of banks of issue. But the loss in such cases is confined to comparatively few persons, all of whom have or may be supposed to have some special opportunity of judging as to the trustworthiness of the paper on which they have relied. The ruin consequent on the inability of banks to cash their notes is spread over a much wider area, runs through all the complicated transactions of trade, and affects a class of persons who have practically no means of judging as to the solvency of the issuers, and by whom such losses are commonly irretrievable.

It may then not unfairly be contended, and may be conceded for the sake of argument, that the evil of which the Act was passed to prevent the recurrence,—the danger to the convertibility of the note,—was such as to justify some kind and degree of exceptionally restrictive

legislation. But, in order to decide whether the particular remedy described by the Act for that evil was or was not expedient, it will be necessary to consider (1) the efficacy of the remedy; (2) its cost; and (3) whether, looking to the nature and extent of the evil to be cured, its cure (supposing the remedy to have been effectual) was worth that cost.

With respect to the *first* point, the efficacy of the remedy; it is generally admitted that the Act of 1844 has effected that which we are assuming to be its object,—the removal of all possibility of danger at certain critical periods to the holders of paper currency on account of the relation between the notes of banks and their cash in hand. It is desirable, however, to bear in mind that (as has been already observed) the Act is composed of two principal ingredients, monopoly and restriction; and that monopoly, considered as a means of providing a trustworthy currency, is, in itself, an expedient of at least doubtful efficacy. The most natural effect of it is precisely the reverse—to induce reckless trading on the part of the banks so privileged, and to remove from them that inducement which free competition supplies to dealers in bank notes, as in any other commodity, to improve to the utmost the quality of the article in which they deal.

The *second* question for consideration is the cost of the remedy which the Act provides; and this, fully understood, we shall find to be enormous. Banks of issue are banks which, besides lending the metallic money at their disposal, lend also their credit in the form of notes payable on demand; and these notes are just so much (less the sum retained to meet demands for their conversion into coin) added to the general fund available for the purpose of profitable investment, whether in the way of production or exchange. Moreover, the addition thus made to the means of increasing the national wealth is an addition which possesses a peculiar value. All the operations of commerce and productive industry are effected through the instru-

mentality either of credit or of metallic money. As applicable to this purpose, credit, compared with metallic money, has this advantage, that its cost is inappreciable; metallic money compared with credit (under any of its forms except that of bank notes) has the advantage of being not to a limited extent only but completely effectual. Bank notes combine both these advantages. They can be supplied at no appreciable expense, and on the other hand, their circulation is not, like that of other forms of credit, confined to a limited class of persons and transactions, but (if allowed to be issued for sums sufficiently small) they are as available for every operation of production and exchange as metallic money itself. In so far then as legislation prevents the issue of bank notes, it prevents the use of a singularly efficacious instrument of commercial and industrial progress.<sup>1</sup> And that the Act of 1844 must have done this to a very serious extent the nature of its provisions leaves no doubt. Accordingly, we find that the Bank of England, with property in capital and deposits nearly double that of the Bank of France, has a paper circulation less by one third; that, notwithstanding her immense commercial inferiority, and though she possesses but one bank of issue, the total note circulation of France is very nearly equal in amount to that of this country; and that, notwithstanding the enormous increase of its trade and metallic currency, the note circulation of this country is at the present moment not materially greater than it was in 1843.

But this is far from being the whole, or even the most important part, of the price which the nation pays for the Act of 1844. Of all the causes which conduce to commercial prosperity, none can be imagined more important than a freely and fully developed banking system.

<sup>1</sup> The prohibition of notes below 5*l.*—that is, of notes such as are almost exclusively available for purposes of production (since notes for a higher amount can rarely be used in payment of wages)—was not the work of the Act of 1844, but of a previous law, passed on account of and immediately after the bank failures of 1825.

The immense services rendered by banks in facilitating and cheapening mercantile transactions, and especially in providing profitable employment for money which would otherwise lie idle, or would be wasted in unproductive consumption, seems to be even now very imperfectly understood. As it is, the great increase of banking business which has taken place in this country since the year 1826 (when the successful efforts of the Legislature to make banks few and insecure by limiting the number of their partners to six were at length discontinued,) has contributed, there can be no doubt, in a very material degree to its extraordinary advance in wealth and prosperity. But that the Act of 1844 has seriously impeded the full and healthy development of banking business in this country is certain. By the monopoly of issue which it established, it removed the inducement to the formation of banks and to the accumulation of deposits in them which it afforded by this important source of profit; while, by closely limiting and encumbering with vexatious conditions the issues of the privileged banks, it in the same manner checked the flow of deposits into them. Prevented from issuing notes, or closely limited in their issues, banks are debarred from a natural and legitimate source of profit, and are either unable to pay any interest at all, or any but a low interest, to depositors, or are obliged to resort for the purpose to investments more or less hazardous; and banking is thus not only discouraged, but made, where it is in operation, less secure. The cost of the Act, in this effect of it, can scarcely be over-estimated. It is hardly possible to place a limit to the advantage which might result from a measure which should remove the obstructions now existing to the free and prosperous action of safely conducted banking establishments, considered especially as a means of attracting and turning to immediate profit the vast amount of money which now, held in small sums by a multitude of persons, is dissipated unproductively or recklessly invested, in the absence of any readily and constantly

accessible channel for its profitable employment.

Such being the amount of evil (whether with or without any compensating advantage in the particular purpose which it fulfils is not here the question) inflicted upon the mercantile interests of the country by the Act of 1844, when trade is pursuing its ordinary course, we have now to inquire what is its effect upon them in times of commercial difficulty and distress. The immediate occasion of what is termed a "commercial crisis" is a sudden and general contraction of credit; and there are two causes by which, taken either separately or together, this contraction of credit is chiefly produced. The first is that which is commonly called "over-trading," or, in other words, excessive commercial or industrial speculation, and in this case the course of events is generally as follows. The unusual extension of credit produces a rapid rise of prices, or in other words, a fall in the exchange value of the precious metals. The precious metals therefore begin to leave the country in search of a better market, and thus the loan fund is contracted; while on the other hand, the perceptible approach of the collapse of speculation causes an unusual demand for money on the part of speculators for the purpose of postponing the evil day. Thus the rate of discount advances under the double action of diminished supply and increased demand. Credit is still further contracted by the panic which begins to affect lenders, and those speculators who are unable to obtain further advances are compelled to sell their goods at the best price they can obtain. Prices accordingly begin to fall; there is a general eagerness to sell in order to avoid still greater losses; and the result is a glut of the market and a still further fall of prices, which will continue for a longer or shorter time, and with more or less ruinous consequences, according to the height to which undue speculation has been carried, and the amount of temporary assistance which those traders whose solvency is endangered are able to obtain. Now what, in such a condition of

affairs, is the effect of the Act of 1844? Observation of actual facts has proved<sup>1</sup> beyond doubt that it is not until a comparatively late stage of the process, and after prices have greatly risen, that there is on such occasions any considerable increase of bank notes, and that the rise of prices is caused primarily and mainly, not by bank notes, but by the extension of mercantile credit. As long indeed as notes which were applicable to the payment of wages were in circulation, it is probable that, when the prevailing speculation had advanced far enough to reach the producers<sup>2</sup> (in its first stage it is usually confined to dealers) bank notes had some effect in increasing prices; but since notes of a value below 5*l.* have been prohibited, banks of issue have been deprived of even this amount of influence in the case. Undoubtedly, when speculation has reached its full height, and the first symptoms of the unsound condition of affairs begin to show themselves, there will be an unusual demand for and a large additional issue of notes for the purpose of enabling speculators to avoid a ruinous sale of the goods which they hold; and in this manner the inevitable catastrophe is postponed for a time, only that it may be more fatal when it actually occurs. In so far, therefore, as at this particular juncture the Act of 1844 restricts the issue of notes, it must be considered as having a tendency to mitigate the evils of the time. But when once the tide has turned and the disaster has begun, its operation is mischievous in the extreme. There is no longer any fear of ministering to undue speculation, or of aggravating the calamity by keeping speculations afloat. It is not the use, but the disuse, of credit that is now in excess. The fall of prices, and the ruin consequent on it, increased by increasing panic, go far beyond the point of natural and necessary reaction; and not only hopelessly insolvent concerns,

<sup>1</sup> The fullest evidence on this point is to be found in Tooke's "History of Prices." See also "Principles of Political Economy," by J. S. Mill, vol. ii. p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> See "Principles of Political Economy," by J. S. Mill, vol. ii. p. 195.



but those of whose ultimate solvency there can be no question, are carried away by the torrent. At such a time the cautious advances of banks are of the utmost value in protecting those whose business is substantially sound, and in mitigating the effects of a panic as unreasonable as the over-confidence from which it is the rebound; and the Act, by preventing all possibility of such timely assistance, seriously adds to the confusion, dismay, and ruin which prevail.

The second of the two causes to which a commercial crisis is mainly attributable is a large and sudden reduction of the general loan fund either by the withdrawal of money for loans to foreign governments, or for the purpose of home or foreign investment, or on account of an unusually large "balance of trade" against this country. Of this character, wholly or chiefly, were the monetary difficulties of 1815, 1839, and 1847. As applicable to such occasions, it is certainly not surprising that the expediency of the Act of 1844 should have been called in question. The ordinary business of production and trade is for the most part carried on by means of advances of money to be repaid when the profits of the several transactions for which the money is borrowed has been realized. The effect then of a sudden and violent contraction of the loan fund is not only to prevent *pro tanto* the renewal of those advances, and to bring to that extent commercial and industrial operations to a stand-still, to the serious loss of those engaged in them, but also that many producers and dealers who require, and would, in the ordinary state of affairs, have obtained an extension of credit, are suddenly called upon to repay the advances made to them. Notwithstanding therefore that their business may be in a perfectly sound condition, and that, with the time ordinarily allowed to them, they would have been able to close profitably the operations in which they are engaged and to fulfil all their obligations, they are compelled to suspend payment. Other traders who have had dealings with them participate

in the disaster; and a panic ensues which may lead to any amount of difficulty and distress. Now in this case the issue of notes, in so far as it enables dealers and producers to continue their business, is an unqualified advantage; it is a proper and natural mode of alleviating the disorder. There is here no question of encouraging rash speculation, or of injuriously retarding a collapse, neither rash speculation nor collapse being among the circumstances of the case. So far then as the Act prevents at such periods any issue of notes which would otherwise take place (it must be remembered that we are, for the present, leaving out of consideration its value considered as an effectual remedy for a particular evil), it is simply and seriously mischievous. That the mere accident of an export of gold or of an unusual demand for it on account of productive enterprise at home, which in itself so far from diminishing adds to the real wealth of the nation, should have power to bring about so much calamity, is an evil greatly to be deplored, and which could only be completely cured by such an increase of mutual confidence, based upon an increase of honesty and prudence, as to admit of the more liberal use of credit under all its forms in substitution for coin. But a law which prevents this remedial employment of credit, in its most effective shape, to the extent or anything like the extent to which but for that law it would even now be possible, ought to have some immense countervailing advantage to recommend it.

Such, reasoning from the nature of the case, we find to be the cost of the Act of 1844 in periods of monetary derangement considered as arising either from excessive speculation, or from a mere contraction of the loan fund in the ordinary condition of mercantile affairs. But it is not upon reasoning alone that we have in this case to depend. Since the passing of the Act three instances of "commercial crisis" have occurred,—the first of which, that of 1847, is attributable to the former, and the second, that of 1857, to the latter of the two causes;

while the third was of mixed origin, in which both causes had part. The first and second of these events were not only far more serious in degree than the third, but were among the very worst calamities of this nature that have ever occurred; and in both of them it became necessary, on the urgent demand of the whole mercantile community, and for the purpose of averting that which it was no great exaggeration to call "universal bankruptcy," to suspend the Act of 1844. The inexpediency of the Act, as applicable to monetary disorders of an aggravated type, is thus demonstrated with a force which no *à priori* argument however conclusive could be expected to bear. The third occurrence of the kind referred to is the pressure and embarrassment from which the money market has recently suffered, but from which it has, even yet, but imperfectly recovered. It has been the result of a combination of causes, among which the demand upon the loan fund consequent on the multiplication of Joint Stock Associations, and the failure of speculations in cotton, were the most active, but which, taken together, have not been sufficient to cause a "crisis" nearly so calamitous as those which preceded it. The fact therefore that the Act has in this instance been allowed to remain in force in no way neutralizes the inference which we have drawn from its suspension on former occasions. It is evident that so strong a measure as the temporary repeal of the law was not likely to be adopted by the Government unless the evil had reached a stage far beyond that which it recently attained. Still less is there any ground for appealing to the comparative mildness of the late monetary disturbance as a proof of the expediency of the Act. For, in the first place, if the Act had really had any such salutary effect in restraining and regulating mercantile and monetary transactions as that which is thus attributed to it, that effect (as has been before observed) is not one of a kind which it is the business of legislation to produce; and in the next, we have shown that in cases

of commercial distress occasioned (as they usually are) by one and both of the two causes to which the recent pressure is mainly attributable, the Act (apart from the service which it renders in protecting the convertibility of the note) is not only not beneficial but directly and seriously the reverse.

It is evident, then, that whatever may be the value of the Act considered as a remedy for a particular evil, it is a remedy of which the cost is extravagantly and ruinously high. In an ordinary state of commercial affairs the severe restrictions which it imposes upon the issue of bank-notes inflicts direct injury upon the nation by paralysing a singularly effective agent of exchange and production, and less direct but still more serious injury by stunting the natural growth of institutions of vital importance to the general welfare; while in the exceptional periods of commercial difficulty, it acts as an aggravation of the prevalent distress, such as (to say the least) is far from being counterbalanced by any beneficial effect which it may have as a restraint upon speculation. We have now to consider, *thirdly*, what was the real nature and extent of the evil which this costly expedient was devised to meet. The evil was an alleged danger to the convertibility of the note:—what was the actual amount of that danger? It shrinks, looked fairly in the face, into much smaller proportions than is commonly supposed. In the usual condition of the money market no such danger had ever been apprehended: it was only at certain abnormal periods of mercantile embarrassment that there was any question of its existence. To what, then, at such periods, did it really amount? And first, with respect to the Bank of England. The earliest commercial "crisis," of which there is any record, occurred in the year 1783, and was the result of "over-trading." In that year the coin and bullion in the Bank of England sank so low as to cause some anxiety: but the anxiety proved to be groundless; for the Bank, by judicious management of its issues,

rode out the gale in perfect safety. The next occurrence of the same kind was in 1793, when, so far from there being any danger to convertibility, the extreme caution of the banks in averting any such danger was the subject of urgent remonstrance on the part of the trading classes; and the Government was actually induced, by an issue of exchequer bills, to supply the "accommodation" which the banks did not think it safe to afford. In 1797 another "crisis" occurred; and the coin and bullion in the Bank having fallen to about 1,000,000*l.* while its circulation was about 8,000,000*l.* the Government interfered by suspending cash payments. But for this measure (mischievous as it was in principle, and as it proved to be in practice) there could have been no real necessity. The issues, though high in proportion to the coin and bullion, were already in course of rapid contraction; and the state of the foreign exchanges indicated a reflux of gold either actual or close at hand. From this time until 1817, when cash payments were substantially resumed, the notes of the Bank of England were inconvertible. In 1818, a "crisis" took place, in which the metallic reserve of the Bank fell to 8,000,000*l.* against a circulation of 28,000,000*l.*; and it was thought necessary again to suspend cash payments. Here, again, it may well be questioned whether the measure was really necessary: but supposing it to have been so, the fact affords no evidence of the danger of unrestricted convertible issues. For the Bank, having every reason which past experience could give to believe that in case of any pressing emergency caused by over-issue the Government would put an end to cash payments, was freed from those ordinary motives to caution by which it would be guided in the event of a repeal of the present law. Cash payments were finally re-established in 1823; and the next serious derangement of the money market was in 1825. During this derangement (perhaps the most calamitous event of the kind which has taken place in this country), the amount of

coin and bullion in the Bank fell to 1,000,000*l.*; and it was obliged to recruit its supply of ready money by borrowing 300,000*l.* of Messrs. Rothschild. The next period of trial was in 1839, when the coin and bullion fell to 2,500,000*l.* against a circulation of about 17,000,000*l.*; and the Bank was compelled to borrow 2,000,000*l.* of the bankers of Paris. The small amount to which on these last occasions the gold and silver in the Bank were reduced, and its compulsory resort to loans on both of them, have been appealed to as, in themselves, going far to justify the Act of 1844. It is difficult to understand upon what grounds. The metallic reserve of the Bank was, it is true, at a low ebb; but there was neither a run upon it by the holders of notes, nor any rational ground for apprehending such an event. One might have supposed it more logical to anticipate from the circumstances of the case similar circumstances in any future case of the same kind; and that an establishment which had borne uninjured so exceptionally severe a trial might be relied on to meet with the same immunity any equally or less critical emergency. Moreover, on the second occasion at least, it seems that the loan was made by the Bank rather from excessive caution than from real necessity, since the tide had already turned and the reflux of bullion was assured. The prevalent notion that a degree of discredit, more or less affecting the whole nation, attached to the application by the Bank of England to the Bank of Paris for assistance, is so purely sentimental as not to require any serious notice; but it may be worth while to mention, for the consolation of those who entertain it, that during the next "crisis" (that of 1847) a similar application was made by the Bank of France to the Bank of England.

With respect to the country banks, the case is different. There can be no question as to the wide-spread disaster, consternation, and misery which has been caused, in times of monetary difficulty, by the inability of country banks to redeem their issues. But it

is to be observed, first, that no such disaster had ever occurred among the banks of Scotland (owing doubtless in great part to the fortunate neglect with which they had been treated by the legislature), and therefore in the case of Scotland the evil was non-existent, and the remedy wholly uncalled for. Secondly, that as regards the rest of the United Kingdom, every serious calamity of the kind which has occurred among the country banks is of a date previous to the repeal, in 1826, of the legal prohibition against the existence of banking partnerships consisting of more than six persons. It is not surprising that under such a law, which gave, in the business of banking, a species of monopoly to private traders, and prevented its being conducted except on a small scale, the paper currency should have been in the last degree unsound. Since its repeal there had been, at the passing of the Act of 1844, no serious disaster on account of country bank-notes. It is true that but one instance of commercial difficulty (that of 1839) had occurred during that period, and that accordingly the extent to which the change in the law had increased the security of the note had been as yet but imperfectly tested by experience. But (supposing that the Act of 1844 had not been passed) there is good reason to believe that there would have been no repetition of the ruin which has from time to time resulted from the over-issue of country banks, and that, so far as regards those establishments, the evil which the Act was intended to cure had already, in great part, been removed. With respect, then, to the country banks, as well as to the Bank of England, it seems clear that the danger contemplated in the Act has been enormously exaggerated, and that the severity of its provisions is out of all proportion to that danger.

We have seen, then, that (1) while the Act has been fully effectual for the accomplishment of its only defensible object—the protection of convertibility, (2) the cost to the country of the double remedy—monopoly and restriction—

which it prescribed has been immense; and we have seen (3), that the evil which the Act was designed to cure,—the danger at certain periods to the convertibility of the note,—is reduced, when closely considered, to dimensions which are quite insignificant as compared with that cost.

From these considerations it seems to follow that the Act of 1844 was a measure inexpedient in the highest degree, and that its repeal, so far from being injurious, would be of the utmost benefit to the commercial interests of the country. The gain to the community resulting from its abolition would be infinitely greater than the loss.

The same considerations lead to the conclusion that there are other important respects in which our currency laws require revision. The monopoly of issue within sixty-five miles of London which is possessed, independently of the Bank Charter Act, by the Bank of England, cannot, if the views which have been expressed in this paper are correct, be defended on any reasonable ground. We have shown that privileges of this nature, granted to one or more banks to the prejudice of banks in general, are injurious as impeding that full development of its banking system which is of such vital consequence to the nation; while it is at least doubtful whether on the whole their tendency is not to increase rather than to diminish the dangers incidental to a paper circulation. The first step in the reform of our currency laws which is so urgently needed would be with the repeal of the Bank Charter Act the abolition of all exclusive privileges, exceptional disabilities, and differential enactments of whatever kind, compensation being given for any interference with vested rights which such a measure might involve. The trade of the country would thus be relieved from an incubus of confused and mischievous regulation, and banking business would be placed, like all other branches of commerce, upon the footing which is essentially necessary to its prosperity—that of free and healthy competition.

This done, there would remain the question whether any and what restrictions or conditions ought to be imposed upon banks for the purpose of insuring the convertibility of their issues. In considering the effect of the Act of 1844 as the particular measure which was adopted for this purpose, we have assumed, for the sake of argument, that some such restrictions or conditions were desirable. It must be admitted, however, that the assumption is a strong one. The special and only plausible ground upon which so direct and singular an interference with the principle of commercial freedom is supposed to be necessary, and especially of the distinction which is in this respect drawn between bank-notes and other forms of credit, is that bank-notes, and they alone, perform all the functions of money, or, in other words, that they are in the fullest and ordinary sense of the term, "currency," and that a currency liable to disaster is an evil of greater extent and importance than a system of mercantile credit with the same liability. The conclusiveness of this argument is, however, far from unquestionable. In the first place, we have found that the evil in question—the liability of bank-notes to disaster—showed itself during between the years 1826 and 1844, when the banking-system of the country was comparatively free, in much smaller proportions than is usually imagined; and there is reason to believe, looking especially to the example of Scotland, that it would have been still smaller in amount if the freedom had been more complete. But even if the danger to be provided against were more formidable in degree than it really is, it may well be doubted whether the case would be such as to admit of departure with impunity from one of the most comprehensive and infallible laws of political economy;—whether the currency is any exception to the rule which holds for all other commodities,—that more harm is done by legal impediments to speculation in them than by the liability of such speculation to failure,—that the best mode of insuring to the public a supply satisfactory both in

quality and quantity is perfect liberty of action on the part of dealers, and perfect liberty of choice on the part of customers; and that legislative regulations in any way interfering with that liberty are not only injurious as restricting trade, but calculated to defeat the very object with which they are framed;—and whether the only legitimate mode of counteracting the consequences of the inability of bankers, as of other traders, to perform their contracts is not to be sought in an improved law of insolvency. Nor should it be forgotten, that in that which appears to be the only instance of perfectly free banking with a paper currency in the strictest sense convertible,—that of the Scotch banks before 1844,—no important failure attended with losses to note-holders was ever known to occur.

Looking, however, to the extreme importance to the public of a currency in which it may entirely confide; to the fact, that in none of the three great commercial countries—England, France, and the United States—has it been considered safe to permit the perfectly unfettered circulation of bank-notes;—taking also into consideration the habitual condition of the public mind upon this subject;—it is not probable that for the present any English statesman will have courage to propose the exemption of banks of issue from all legislative provision of whatever kind for the security of their issues. It becomes necessary, therefore, to inquire what should be the nature of the conditions imposed? There are three expedients which have been suggested, and which appear practicable for the accomplishment of the object in view. These are (1) The limitation of the aggregate amount for which notes may be issued beyond the coin or bullion actually in hand; (2) The prohibition of notes below a certain value; and (3) To require the possession of Government or other trustworthy securities as a guarantee for the redemption of the notes. Of these expedients (of which the monetary legislation of this country presents a strange compound) the two first are far more objectionable in



their nature than the third, inasmuch as they involve a much more direct and decided departure from principle. It is evident, that to limit the amount to which notes may be issued beyond that of the precious metals in hand is a more direct and positive interference with freedom of trade than to allow of unlimited issues with the sole proviso that they shall be based upon satisfactory securities. An equally direct interference with it is involved in the prohibition of notes below a certain value, the proper object of which is not to prevent the failure of banks from over-issue, but to mitigate the effects of their failure when it occurs, especially as affecting the labouring classes. And though it is true that, by this effect of it, the most serious of the evils attendant upon such catastrophes is obviated, this advantage is balanced by the fact that in preventing the application of bank-notes to the payment of wages, it deprives them in great part of their efficacy as instruments of production, and diminishes to that extent the demand for labour and the remuneration which it is able to obtain.

It is, then, in the third of the available expedients—the prohibition to issue notes except upon the guarantee of securities actually the property of the issuers, and such as to command unflinching confidence—that the least objectionable mode of providing by legislation for the convertibility of paper money is to be found. It is obvious, that if full provision is made to insure the constant possession by the issuers of an equivalent value in securities, there can be no depreciation of notes and no loss to note-holders. In England, by the provisions of the Bank Charter Act, and in France (where the arrangement chiefly relied on for maintaining the security of issues is the complete monopoly of issue given to the National Bank) by the law which requires the investment of 4,000,000*l.* or about half the capital of the Bank, in the public funds, the principle of such a restriction has already been admitted. After the disastrous failures of American banks in

1839, a law was passed by the Legislature of New York (which has recently been imitated by the Federal Government, and applied throughout the Union), under which notes could be issued only on the deposit by the issuers of securities to the full amount of their issue. Accordingly, the failures which have occurred among the banks of New York since the adoption of this measure, and which during the “crisis” of 1839 were very numerous, have involved no run for gold on the part of the note-holders, and the notes of the insolvent banks have in all cases been redeemed. There are, however, two objections to the mode in which the principle has been applied in the United States. One of these is, that one half of the amount of the securities deposited may consist of obligations other than those of the Government, such as the Bonds of Railways and other Companies, and that the liability of such securities to depreciation has caused some loss to holders of the notes of bankrupt issuers. The other is that the duty of providing the banks with notes in exchange for the guarantees deposited, and of redeeming them when necessary, is imposed upon the Government itself. Both the power and the responsibility thus given to the Government would probably, and with reason, be disapproved in this country. But the plan involves no necessity for the discharge of these functions by the State. It has been proposed (in a pamphlet<sup>1</sup> recently published by M. Constantin Baer, remarkable for its simple and lucid treatment of a subject which is enveloped in much factitious obscurity), that the delivery to the banks of notes in return for securities should be the business of a central committee composed of delegates from the banks themselves; nor would there in all probability be any serious objection to such an arrangement. Whether even this machinery would be necessary, and whether it might not be sufficient to require such assurance as frequent publication of

<sup>1</sup> “*La Question des Banques en France et en Italie. Lettres à M. Michel Chevalier.*” Par M. Constantin Baer. Turin. 1864.

accounts would afford as to the actual possession by the banks of the prescribed amount of securities, may be doubted. But the precautionary arrangements which might in this respect be necessary—the proportion, if any, in which the securities deposited might be allowed to consist of obligations other than those of the Government, and to what classes of such obligations the permission should extend—and whether, as M. Baer proposes, it might not be desirable that the banks should at all times hold coin and bullion (on which notes might also be issued) bearing a certain proportion to the securities which they deposit in guarantee,—are questions of no very formidable difficulty, but which would require careful discussion when the precise mode in which the proposal might best be carried into effect in this country came to be considered.

Monopoly of whatever kind being thus removed, and restriction reduced to one simple and uniform requirement, the least embarrassing of any by which the object in view could be attained, the way would be cleared for the gradual assumption by the banking system of this country of an importance proportionate to the extent of its commerce and industry. No longer debarred from the profit incidental to the issue of notes, banking establishments would receive that innocuous kind of legislative encouragement which consists in the removal of artificial restraints; and being in a condition to afford interest to depositors without transgressing the bounds of prudent management, would rapidly absorb a vast amount of surplus property which is now uselessly squandered or hazardingly employed, and which would be added to the fund available for reproductive investment, or, in other words, for the creation of wealth. Nor would it be unreasonable to expect, that while such was the effect of the change upon the interests of the country in the normal condition of its trade and circulation, it would also

tend to avert, or to mitigate when they occurred, those periodical convulsions of the money-market which have been the cause of so much evil. For, in the first place, it might fairly be anticipated that the amount of the reckless investment which is a frequent cause of such calamities would be diminished, in so far as that money which at such periods is now directly invested by its owners would then be left at the disposal of establishments well versed in business, and in a position to judge of the character of mercantile projects. And, in the next place, at that particular stage of a commercial “crisis” when the funds necessary to counteract the unnatural depression of credit are in disastrous deficiency, deposits which are now withdrawn from banks under the influence of the general panic would, under the proposed arrangement, be on the contrary attracted to or prevented from leaving them by the greatly increased rate of interest which is characteristic of the time, and which would add to the profits of banks, and, therefore, to those of their depositors. It might even be hoped that when the expediency of the new system of guarantee had been tested, some gradual and tentative modification of it might be found possible, such as might prepare the way for the admission of banks in this country to that complete liberty of action on which all other commercial business depends for complete success, and from which, on evidence which is so far from being entirely satisfactory, they have been excluded. In any case, a great reform would have been effected, and a great anomaly removed. It would no longer be said that England, which is the stronghold of free and independent commerce, is also that of restrictive and paternal monetary laws; or that the most important wheel in the machinery of her material progress is clogged by an unsightly mass of complicated, excessive, and random legislation.

## ESSAYS AT ODD TIMES.

## VI. OF HANDS.

I BEG to inform the reader, *in limine*, that I am not about to give him a *rechauffé* of Sir Charles Bell's book upon the hand. In the first place, I have never read the treatise in question. In the second, if I had read it, I should most certainly abstain from inflicting upon him an abstract, which I take to be an altogether mischievous and hurtful form of literature.

But the subject of the human hand has been suggested to me for an essay by an engraving after Lucas Van Leyden, which lies upon my study-table at this moment. It represents a monk preaching. The picture itself I have never seen, but, to judge from the engraving, it must needs be a powerful one. A little group of German citizens, clad in the quaint garb of the fifteenth century, are standing around a pulpit in the open air just outside of the parish church, listening to the fervent discourse of the preacher. And a fervent discourse it evidently is, if we may judge from the effect it produces upon the hearers. One of them, smitten by some word of his which has struck home, actually writhes in agony of soul and body, and throws up his hands to heaven, like a man shot through the heart. In the distance is a group, intended, I suppose, to show what the result of preaching should be—a citizen distributing a dole of food at his door to the blind and the halt and the poor. But the centre of the subject is the preaching monk. And preach he does, in good truth, not only with his lips; his whole body preaches; his outstretched hands—they are the most eloquently pleading hands I have ever seen pictured.

And, looking at this print, I cannot help asking myself whether the small success of many of the preachers of our day may not be in some measure

attributable to their neglect of one of the great instruments of good oratory; I mean the hand. I have listened to many preachers in many pulpits; I have observed their movements narrowly, and I have come to the conclusion that they either hide away their hands altogether, as things to be ashamed of, or, if they employ them at all, do so in one of three ways: clutching the sides of the pulpit, as if to hold on by it; waving them up and down with a sort of see-saw motion; or, if very violently eloquent, thumping the cushion with the right fist—the only result of which latter movement has been that the reverend gentleman has involved himself (and perhaps his subject) in a cloud of dust of his own raising. And the lay orators whom I have listened to have been equally faulty in this respect. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, indeed, talks so well as to compel us to forget that he is evidently working the handle of an invisible pump at the moment that he most eloquently appeals to our feelings. But the smaller lights of oratory have not the advantage of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's eloquence; though, perhaps, what they want in matter they make up for by voice. "I like our parson," said an old woman to me the other day, speaking of a neighbour of mine, a strenuous and earnest preacher, of whom, indeed, it cannot be predicated that he wants matter or manner; "I like our parson very much; *he do bawl so.*"

And, if our orators make but a poor use of the hands which God has given them, it seems to me that our writers and our painters have also somewhat neglected that great instrument of expression, the human hand, in their pictures and in their writings. The painters, indeed, are wholly without excuse; and the novelists, by their neglect, have missed many an incident which would have given point to their

stories. Only see how a master of the art makes use of the hand of his puppets to set a charming picture before us, just, too, where the novice would have coarsely drawn upon the old stage property of lips and kisses, without producing half the effect which Mr. Reade produces with a pair of busy little hands. "Then came a little difficulty. "Gerard, the adroit, could not tie his "ribbon again as Catherine had tied it. "Margaret, after slyly eyeing his efforts "for some time, offered to help him. "Then a fair head, with its stately "crown of auburn hair, glossy and glowing through silver, bowed sweetly "towards him ; and, while it ravished "his eyes, two white supple hands "played delicately upon the stubborn "ribbon, and moulded it with soft and "airy touches . . . . Nay, when the "taper fingers had at last subjugated "the ends of the knot, her mind was "not quite easy till, by a manœuvre "peculiar to the female hand, she had "made her palm convex, and so applied "it with a gentle pressure to the centre "of the knot,—a sweet little coaxing "hand-kiss, as much as to say, 'now "be a good knot and stay as you are.' "The hand-kiss was bestowed on the "ribbon, but the wearer's heart leaped "to meet it."

And painters, and actors, what do they not lose by their neglect of the language of the hand ? There is a story told of a celebrated portrait-painter of the last century, that he had so much business and such love for money that he would send away his sitters as soon as he had painted in their faces, leaving the drapery and the hands, which he classed together (as accessories, I suppose !), to be finished from fancy by his assistants. Of course his portraits are worthless ; hands and faces being equally bad. Whereas, if he had taken care of the hands, the faces, I fancy, would have taken care of themselves. And you have doubtless witnessed, my reader, the conventional actress mimicking grief, wringing her hands in all the stage imagery of woe ! "I have seen," writes a painter, a close observer of fact,

"most of the best actors of the last  
"thirty years : and not one of their  
"personifications of the passions remains  
"on my mind so distinctly as that of a  
"poor woman, whose child was run  
"over in one of the back streets of St.  
"Giles's ! I can recollect her attitude  
"and the wringing of her hands, an  
"expression of grief I had never before  
"observed. I had thought it was a  
"twisting of the hands closed together,  
"whereas this poor creature passed one  
"hand over the back of the other alter-  
"nately, ending with a strong compression of the fingers." Now, was it anything like this that we have seen at the theatre ?

When we remember what the office of the hands is in the human economy, how the whole labour of life is mainly done by them,—every duty of self-help or charitable assistance—it would almost seem as if the human body itself were but a machine for setting a pair of hands to work. Moreover, the hand performs a most important part in illustrating a man's thoughts ; it is a fellow-labourer with the tongue. With the hand we beg, pray, re-use, deprecate, attest : with the hand we invite, and with the hand we dismiss. The way in which a man gives you his hand to shake is a pretty fair test of his disposition. The shy man shakes your hand in a sort of fumbling and jerking way, and drops it abruptly, being evidently in doubt as to whether he ought to have pulled off his glove or kept it on. The rough and hearty man squeezes your hand to a jelly. Most of us, I suppose, have met with the person who considers that he makes himself of importance in the world by offering a couple of fingers to his acquaintance ; though but few, I fear, have had the presence of mind to give him back a couple of fingers in return, leaving him to get out of the position as best he might. Most men have undergone the official shake, in which the great man of the moment puts his hand into yours as if it were a dead fish, having to go through the same ceremony with perhaps a dozen or a score of others after you.

Passing by the rough brown horny hand of toil (which is, perhaps, as good a one as any to shake) and merely glancing at its opposite, of which I would say that a delicate hand, white, soft, and flaccid, with long tapering fingers, and filbert-shaped nails, may be "a most excellent thing in woman," but in a man I distrust it—"habet fœnum in cornu"—beware of that man, whether as friend or foe—he has never done one day's honest manly toil, whether for his pleasure or his profit; I come to a hand which (in imagination) I press to my lips. There is something to me very pathetic in the hand of an aged person. Its history is written upon it so clearly, so indelibly, mapped out in wrinkle and vein. How many hands has it clasped, which now are dust; clasped till the loving pressure they returned faded out

with the fading breath! There is one such hand I know, and love—a woman's. It is thin, and lean and wrinkled, the blue veins standing out upon it clearly, and the knuckles prominent enough; but still it is soft and white, and lovely. It is almost worn out, you see, in the service of a tender heart: a hand well experienced in the little kindly offices of a sick room; a hand that has smoothed many a pillow, and calmed many a throbbing and feverish brow. None so active and light as it in doing—none so ready to abstain from touch or movement, when to do would be officious.

May we all have such a hand as this, my friendly reader, near us, when the great world we live in seems but a speck upon the horizon of eternity, and, sick of life, we turn our faces to the wall!

## DEAD MEN WHOM I HAVE KNOWN; OR, RECOLLECTIONS OF THREE CITIES.

BY THE EDITOR.

DR. SAMUEL BROWN—HUGH MILLER—DE QUINCEY.

DR. SAMUEL BROWN.

THERE is now before me an old letter, consisting of two sheets and a half of the roughish quarto letter-paper that was in use before the days of the penny postage. The handwriting is large, straggling, and juvenile, and is in contrast with the power of expression shown in the letter, and also, though not so decidedly, with its matter. Of this last the following is a specimen:—

"No science shall, *can* ever be perfect, till reduced to the absolute logic of mathematics. Astronomy, statics, hydraulics, acoustics, &c. are perfect because they are mathematized. For instance, we shall never be certain that we have gained a last and infallible generalization of the wondrous alchemy of our world till we can reason mathematically on chemical

"questions. Is there any hope that we shall ever be able to do so? Yes! You and I *shall* yet see that jubilee-day of corpuscular science! It *shall* be proved that all the varieties of matter issue from *one* elementary kind—that the fifty-five elements at present recognised are all isomeric compounds of this one with itself, increasing in an arithmetical progression; that the affinities of each are in the ratio of their bulks, which shall *then* be known; that —. Shall I go on? No! it would hurt you, and it would hurt myself. If this consummation so much to be desired were brought about, how many thousand thousand grandeurs would it expose in every branch of human knowledge! How it would bear on the great metaphysical questions!"

The letter from which this is an



extract was written in the winter of 1836-7 by a young medical student of the University of Edinburgh to an intimate friend and former schoolfellow of his with whom he kept up a correspondence. Not till some four or five years after the letter was written did it happen to myself to know the writer personally. By that time it was impossible for any one living in Edinburgh, and taking any note of its intellectual ongoings, not to have heard a good deal of Dr. Samuel Brown. He was a scion of a family already remarkable in the South of Scotland as the Browns of Haddington. They were so called in affectionate recollection of their ancestor, the Rev. John Brown of Haddington (1722—1787), author of "The Dictionary of the Bible," "The Self-Interpreting Bible," and other popular religious works. Of one branch of this family is the present Dr. John Brown of Edinburgh, the author of "Horse Subsecivæ," "Rab and his Friends," and other well-known writings. Of another branch was the Samuel Brown of whom we now speak. He was born at Haddington on the 23d of February, 1817; and in the winter of 1832-3 he entered the University of Edinburgh as a medical student.

Nominally a student of medicine, Brown seems never to have contemplated the actual practice of the profession, but to have attached himself to it purely on account of the sciences which meet in the education for it. Now, among the medical students, from all parts of Britain, then attending the classes in Edinburgh, there was an unusually brilliant cluster of young men similarly impassioned. Edward Forbes, two years older than Brown, was his fellow-student throughout the whole course; and among others who were his fellow-students wholly or partially were the present professors Lyon Playfair, Goodsir, and Bennett of Edinburgh, the late Dr. George Wilson, Professor Day of St. Andrews, Dr. John Percy and Professor Ramsay of London, and the lamented Henry Goodsir, who went out as naturalist in Sir John Franklin's fatal

Arctic Expedition. According to all accounts, it was a glorious time of good fellowship and of mutual encouragement in all high aims for the young world of medical students in Edinburgh. Tradition speaks in particular of the Edward Forbes of those days, and how that radiant sociability and that chivalry of intellect which made him to the last the darling of our British world of science manifested themselves to the admiration of all in the smaller world to which he then belonged. For him and his fellows the ordinary means of intellectual intercourse were all too little. Meetings in the class-rooms, or for essay-reading and debating in the College-societies, even when supplemented by jovial evenings in each other's rooms, were not enough. A magazine was started, and carried on for a year or two—the contributors forming a Maga Club in the University. But the Maga was a vent chiefly for the superabundant humours of the associated young medicals. More was required to express the tumult of ideas and aspirations within them. To this end there was founded a kind of Rosicrucian fraternity, under the name of "The Universal Brotherhood of Friends of Truth," or, as it came to be called more familiarly "The *Oicromathic* Brotherhood." For the Brethren had chosen for their motto these three words, *Oïnos*, *Ἔπος*, *Μαθήσις* (Wine, Love, Learning), to indicate that they were young and joyous, and that in their pursuit of truth they were to be neither hermits nor ascetics; and this motto, or its trilateral abridgment O. E. M. they had embroidered or engraved on badges which they constantly wore—a roseate ribbon, a silver triangle, and what not. And had they not their Archimagus or Grand Master, their subordinate officers, their two orders of adepts, and their ceremonial of admission? And was there not a pressure from the outside to get admitted into the brotherhood, till it numbered more than a hundred members, all carefully chosen, and, though still chiefly medicals, yet not exclusively such?

Despite the juvenile filagree and

affectation of Rosicrucianism, there is ample testimony, not only in the subsequent careers of all the chief members, but also in the manifestos and mutual addresses of the brotherhood at the time, that a fine intellectual enthusiasm was fostered by the association. "The highest aim of man," said the founders, "is the discovery of Truth; the search after Truth is his noblest occupation. "It is more—it is his duty. Every step on wards we take in science and learning tells us how nearly all the sciences are connected. There is a deep philosophy in this connexion yet undeveloped—a philosophy of the utmost moment to man; let us seek it out." Translating this language of exhortation into the language of fact, one can see that, in respect of the element of *μαθησις*, the utility of the association consisted in its bringing together a number of young naturalists, young geologists, young chemists, young physiologists, and young metaphysicians, pledged to each other in such a manner that there was established not only mutual fidelity and tolerance, but also a certain common property of ideas and speculations. And what of the elements of *ἔργον* and *οἶκος*? Doubtless, they took care of themselves. Conceive the smaller festive gatherings throughout the year, or the great yearly festival, where, from one end of the table round which sat the brethren, with the roseate ribbons on the breasts of all, and the silver triangles and stars on those of the privileged, Edward Forbes would troll out, at a particular hour, the Oineromathic song which he had written, calling on all to join in the chorus.

"Fill ye up a brimming glass,  
Jolly brother-students,  
Ere you let the bottle pass,  
Jolly brother-students!

"Alma Mater, if you please,  
Her professors and degrees,  
And our rights and liberties,  
Jolly brother-students!

(Chorus.)

"To the maids whose love we prize,  
In the sunshine of whose eyes  
Earth again is Paradise,  
Jolly brother-students!

(Chorus.)

"Here's our sacred triune sign,  
And the words that on it shine,  
*Learning, Love, and Rosy Wine,*  
Jolly brother students!  
(Chorus.)"

Side by side with Edward Forbes, on many of these occasions, was young Samuel Brown. He had been recognised, from the first, as one who had in a pre-eminent degree brought into the brotherhood an original endowment of that eager element of *μαθησις* the development of which was its truest distinction. "I was fired," says one friend of this date, "by his pure and noble enthusiasm, and our discussions were usually of lofty themes. One could not but feel the better for being brought into contact with him, however casually—he was so bright, so good." And not long after, George Wilson, in one of his letters, thus expresses his sense of the value of Brown's friendship: "The gaining of such a friend was the stimulus to more active study, and a most potent motive to steady perseverance; and many a day-dream of the future, and many an air-built castle, had him for its hero." How far Brown had then published among his companions the conception that was taking possession of him does not appear. That chemistry was his hobby they had long known. Most of his spare time, since his boyhood, had been spent over retorts and crucibles. So far as I can find, however, the letter which I have quoted is the earliest record of the rising in Brown's mind of any definite form of that speculation to which he surrendered all his subsequent life.

What the speculation was is plain enough. So far as Chemistry had then gone, all the material frame of nature, all the endless variety of substances on the earth, was to be conceived as composed of fifty-five elements (such was then the ascertained number, but more were expected) singly and in all sorts of combinations. The proportions in which the fifty-five elements, from hydrogen to platinum, always united to form compounds had been numerically ascertained; and at least a con-

venient way of representing the fact of chemical combination was to fancy that the atoms or ultimate particles of the elementary substances were of weights, relatively to each other, which might be expressed by the numbers signifying their combining proportions. When, therefore, Nature meant to make any compound, what was the process? What but, for every atom of the intended compound, to take the necessary number of atoms of each of the required elementary ingredients, and compel them into union? Such, but with many varieties of hypothesis, was the state into which speculative chemistry had been brought by Dalton's magnificent generalization. That corpuscular science had not even here reached its utmost limits, was, I should suppose, a very general feeling among chemists. That Nature had fifty-five elements or thereabouts in her laboratory, all radically distinct, and that out of these she had formed all the varieties of terrestrial matter, employing some of the elements largely and others more sparingly and exquisitely, might be a handy provisional conception. But was it likely to endure? Could any soul rest in it? Samuel Brown's could not. Others might go on with the chemistry of the fifty-five elements, content with the certainties which it gave and the ways of achievement which it opened up, and waiting for such a simplification of the theory as might gradually loom into view. *He* would be in among the fifty-five elements at once, laughing at their *fifty-fivity*! There must be another way of accounting for the facts! What if the apparent multiplicity of the elements to chemical analysis were but the result of various atomic arrangements of one elementary kind of matter, as had been the dream of ancient sages and of the mediæval alchemists?

So, from the evidence before me, I interpret Samuel Brown's thoughts and anticipations about the year 1837. In that year his medical studies were interrupted by a visit to St. Petersburg. There he caught typhus, from which he recovered with difficulty. Returning

to Edinburgh in 1838, he completed his studies, and in 1839 graduated as M.D. In the winter of 1840-1, he and Edward Forbes delivered in Edinburgh a joint course of lectures on the Philosophy of the Sciences; and in the same year there appeared in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh* the paper in which he first formally broached his notion of the mutual convertibility of the chemical elements. It was entitled "Experiments in Chemical Isomerism," and contained, if I mistake not, accounts of processes for transmuting carbon into silicon. In 1841 Brown came to London; and he resided, I think, for some time about Woolwich, having a laboratory there and an assistant. Two tracts which he published in London, under the title of "Lay Sermons on the Theory of Christianity," found their way to Edinburgh, and were heard of by me before I knew anything of the writer.

My first acquaintance with Samuel Brown must have been in 1842, when he had just returned from his brief stay in England. Edward Forbes was then gone from Edinburgh, and the Oinero-mathic Brotherhood was a thing defunct, or known only by rumour. Brown and his researches in Isomerism stood out now on their own account. I remember well how the whisper reached me of this extraordinary young man, who had so far revived Alchemy that he could transmute metals. For it was not now only the transmutation of carbon into silicon that was talked of, but that of rhodium into iron, and perhaps of iron into platinum, with I know not what other possibilities. Sceptical as one might be, on the ground of the difficulty of conceiving what form of experiment had escaped all the former transmutationists, one could not but feel a desire to meet a person of whom the reports were so unusual.

And really a first meeting with Samuel Brown was something to be remembered. A thin, pale, dark-haired young man, of eager and vivid look, with a graceful alacrity in all his movements, thoroughly frank and self-possessed, fluent at once on any topic that turned up, and opening with you rather in

the playful vein than in any vein of transcendentalism, or "high-falutin," as the Americans call it—such was the Alchemist. We would ere long call him the Alchemist to his face, and chaff him on the subject of his transmutations, and he would take all good-humouredly and give us back as good as he got. But, in truth, there was such a fund of life, culture, and geniality of all kinds in him, so much of theosophy, and philosophy, and literary liking, so much of miscellaneous acquaintance with men and things, that there was no need for thinking of him long as Chemist or as Alchemist, unless one chose to do so. His presence in any little company acted as a general intellectualizing influence, lifting the talk out of commonplace, sustaining it at a higher altitude than it would probably have reached had he been absent, and swaying it hither and thither at that altitude by rapid cross-impulses and suggestions. For he was a beautiful talker himself, with always a certain soaring tendency, which, however, did not take him into cloudiness, but rather into that region of clear wonder where the mind entertains itself with the extreme generalizations of physical science. There was perhaps now and then a touch too much of the grandiloquent for cynical tastes—an unnecessary use of such Emersonian words as "seer," "mission," and the like, then trying to naturalize themselves, and also of polysyllabic words like "organific" and "Methodology." But, save with the cynical, even this was but a sign of the freshness and exuberance of the speaker's mind ; or, if ever there was too much of it for others, it was redeemed by the speaker's versatility, when, a moment afterwards, he would be using as plain words as anybody else and be ready for the simplest fun. All in all, he possessed in a wonderful degree that quality which enables intellect to represent itself best in conversation—carelessness of the fact of an external opposing medium. It is the opposite of bashfulness, and yet need not have a semblance of arrogance or aggressiveness. It is simply that one is endowed so that

the ideas and fancies that rise in one are let flow forth as a matter of course, without the least sense of the mass of stolid resistance they have to encounter, as represented in the ring of grinning faces round about one, each face hiding its own ideas and fancies, and caring vastly more for them than for yours, if indeed it is not dead-set against yours even as it grins and bows and listens. With the bashful or taciturn man it is different. He is too conscious of the ring of grinning faces and of what they conceal. It is not a void that seems to be around him into which he may let his voice exercise itself by way of mere thinking aloud, nor is it a sympathetic medium through which his words will find easy way ; it is an obstinate aggregate of other people's thinkings, and prejudices, and cynical lookings at every new speaker, as much as to say, "Who the — are *you*?" through which if one is to send anything it must be done with heat and an inconvenient rousing of the spirit. Hence, as a thought comes, a more frequent suppression of it than utterance of it—a feeling "Why bother people with it?" or, "If I begin, I shall have to follow up, and explain, and get into an argument, and it isn't worth while." And so, unless you fire him to the exploding point, my gentleman sits mum. Happily, however, all are not so constituted. There are some who, whether from native sociability or acquired habit, do let themselves flow forth, are not ashamed of their most casual and momentary thinkings, and either ignore all external resistance to them or feel sure that nothing so much better is going but that they may take their chance. It is well that there should be such. The animation which they carry with them wherever they go generates as well as circulates thought, and obliges everybody. For, after all, the opposing medium around one is not so tough as some would think. Besides the women and the young, who constitute between them a large portion of society everywhere, there are plenty of persons to whom it is natural and pleasant to relate themselves sympathetically

to whatever comes in their way; and, if only the talk is of sufficiently good quality, such is the magnetism of mind upon mind that its continuance relaxes the opposition of even the morose, and they too yield to the charm.

Samuel Brown's conversational power was as delightful to others as it was easy to himself. Certainly none of his writings convey an adequate impression of what he could be among his friends. It must not be supposed, however, that he went after the reputation of a talker, or spent his time in society for that purpose. At the time of which I speak, he had his headquarters in a strange, solitary, tumble-down kind of house in Portobello, some two miles out of Edinburgh. We used to call it "Hades;" and, calling upon him and his assistant there, and getting admission through a gate into an inclosed courtyard, we would find them in the room which they had fitted up as a laboratory, and where, amid an assortment of all sorts of odds and ends, including a stuffed alligator, or some such beast, we understood them to be pursuing their transmutations. Only now and then would Brown leave this seclusion for an evening in Edinburgh. Accordingly, having occasion to leave Edinburgh myself about this time, when my thoughts recurred to Brown during my absence, I fancied him always in this out-of-the-way place, rather than in Edinburgh, or, if he quitted it, rambling in solitary meditation over the adjacent heights of Arthur's Seat. I remember addressing a letter to him "Hades, Portobello," and it reached him without difficulty.

The year 1843 was a critical one in Brown's career. He was then twenty-six years of age; and his chemical speculations had taken such shape and certainty in his mind that he came forward in Edinburgh with a course of four lectures on the Atomic theory. The audience addressed was one of the most brilliant that had ever assembled for any such occasion in Edinburgh, including Lord Jeffrey, Dr. Chalmers, George Combe, Sir William Hamilton,

and many other distinguished citizens. The lectures consisted, in great part, of reviews and appreciations of previous movements in chemistry, leading up to Brown's new hypothesis. This was still the hypothesis which had fascinated him so far back as 1836-7; but the form of the hypothesis seems in the interval to have taken a new development. It was now announced, if I mistake not, in some such way as this:—There are at present two competing hypotheses as to the atomic constitution of bodies. There is the common one, which supposes the atoms of bodies to be actual solid nuclei of the same stuff as the aggregate bodies, inconceivably small indeed, but still occupying space, and, if not mathematically indivisible, yet indivisible by those forces which are competent to the division of their aggregates. Against this hypothesis, which satisfied Dalton (who, indeed, always thought of the atoms as good thumping things, and represented them practically by musket-balls), there was the old hypothesis of Boscovich—always fascinating to minds of an idealistic turn—which offered to account for the phenomena of matter on the supposition of atoms not as solid nuclei of stuff at all, but as mere mathematical points, centres of attraction and repulsion. Brown's hypothesis, as I understand it, was neither Boscovich's nor Dalton's, but a third hypothesis—more material than the one, inasmuch as it did suppose a primal stuff of all matter, but less complexly material than the other, inasmuch as it did not suppose a *fifty-fifty* or any other numerical diversity of kinds of material stuff, but only a modifiability of the arrangements of one element. This element was to be conceived as neither solid, liquid, nor gasiform—which three states of matter are but different phenomena or conditions of the aggregation of the atoms of the essence or prime element. Well, but what imaginable mode of relationship among the atoms of such a prime element would account for the varieties of actual matter? Astronomy here furnished the analogy. What if the atoms of the prime element, centres



of attractive and repulsive force, were at distances from each other, relatively to their own dimensions, as great as the planetary and astral distances relatively to the sizes of the astronomical masses, so that within each cubic inch of metal, wood, or what not, that the eye looked down upon, there might be atomic systems and processes of orbs, and wheelings, actions, and reactions, as amenable to a geometrical calculus, if it could probe its way among such infinitesimals, as were the systems, the orbs and wheelings, the actions and reactions of astral space? Here I rather lose myself in following Brown; nor have I the means of recovering, with anything like precision, his uses of the astronomical analogy, so as to make either the variety of the reputed elements of the chemical books, or their mutual transmutability, conceivable. I suppose, however, that, to his imagination, one unknown atomic system of the prime element constituted sulphur, another carbon, another silicon, and so on, and that his imagination farther was that there might be means of breaking through the spheres of mechanical attraction among the reputed elementary atomic systems, so as to reach the interior systems themselves. The problem of Alchemy, at all events, according to his hypothesis, behoved to be the finding of some such method of interference with corpuscular arrangements as should be equivalent to the sudden crushing together or dilatation of an astral system. The fancied analogy of Astronomy and Atomics had occupied him till it had become a form of his thought. He used to talk of "the sky of an atom" till one seemed to be actually standing on the minute rotundity and looking up to a firmament over it.

Alas! all this Paracelsianism had to be brought to a harder test than that of exposition in lectures to a lay audience. In his lectures he took care to offer his notion purely as a hypothesis, or speculative conjecture. The audience, therefore, besides testifying the admiration they could not but feel for expositions so eloquent, thought themselves justified

in affirming, through Dr. Chalmers, as their spokesman in returning thanks to the young lecturer, at least the *relevancy* of his hypothesis—its title to a further hearing. Many, I believe, went farther than this. At all events, when, in the same year, the chair of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh became vacant by the death of Dr. Hope, the desire that Samuel Brown should succeed him was very general in the city. His manifest ability, it was argued, irrespective of the speculation to which he had pledged himself, recommended him for the post. But, naturally, in the actual contest, all turned on the validity of his speculation; and here the highest authorities in the chemical world at once spoke out. So far as these authorities had looked into any of his published processes for transmutation, or had any accounts of the results of these processes, they had been able to come to but one, and that an unfavourable, conclusion. "But let him even now repeat the experiments," they said, "in any of our laboratories." Brown did actually go to Dublin, on the invitation of Dr. (now Sir Robert) Kane, who volunteered him every facility and assistance. After six weeks, the report was that there had been total failure. Brown's own friend, Dr. George Wilson, of Edinburgh, devoted many weeks to a careful repetition of the experiments in his own laboratory, but with no result more satisfactory than the finding, in one experiment, "an apparently anomalous appearance, to a small extent, of silicon." In short, by the end of 1843, not only had Brown's candidature for the Chemistry chair in Edinburgh been unsuccessful, but all faith in his experiments had vanished from the world of chemistry. He was left in possession only of his hypothesis.

For nearly thirteen years after this turning-point in his fortunes, Samuel Brown lived on an object of unabated interest and affection to all who really knew him. There were many, indeed, who wished nothing better for him than that, still so young a man, and with such brilliant and versatile powers, he should confess himself beaten in his past

effort, and exert himself in some new way. But Brown could not reason so. His hypothesis was inwrought with his very fibre; and, though we did not now hear much of it from him, we understood that he persevered in it. Still, for some years in Edinburgh, and then in London, with various intermediate removals, he was understood to be plying in secret new forms of his old experiments. On the whole, however, his activity now, for some years at least, was a little more miscellaneous. Not a few were our pleasant meetings with him in Edinburgh from 1844 to 1847, when he would come among us, and, leaving Chemistry and Alchemy utterly out of the talk, be as one of ourselves. Then between 1844 and 1852 there was a considerable series of articles from his pen in the *North British Review*, the *Westminster Review*, and other periodicals, British and American, chiefly on subjects connected with the history of science. Nor were his writings only in prose. He had projected, under the title of the "Humanities of Science," a collection of sonnets, not unlike the Ecclesiastical Sonnets of Wordsworth, that should express the memorable moments and celebrate the venerable names in each of the chief sciences. He accomplished only an introductory series, and the series of sonnets in Astronomy. A more extensive poetical effort was a tragedy, *Galileo Galilei*, written by way of amusement during recovery from an illness, and of which a limited number of copies were printed. The following is a portion of the Recantation Scene in the Court of the Inquisition:—

I recant.

"GALILEO.

FIRST INQUISITOR.

This free and frank profession, Galileo, Believe us, is received with joy unfeigned. The Holy Office were content; the Church That is without requireth something more— Full recantation on thy bended knees.

GALILEO (on his knees).

I, Galileo, man and sinner, do,  
Before the universe and its Creator,  
The passing and the coming breed of men,  
Angels and saints, imprisoned souls and devils,  
Confess my life has been o'ergrown with lies,

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And mainly one, wherewith I filled the world:  
Here I disown, tear down, denounce, and  
damn it.  
Firm stands the Earth, the everlasting hills sit  
still,  
The Sun doth come and go, the sky revolves;  
So help me God in death's dismay!

ALL.

Amen!

FIRST INQUISITOR.

Our sometime prisoner free, the Court is closed.

[*The Court rises; GALILEO, coming out of a momentary swoon, springs madly to his feet.*]

GALILEO.

It does revolve, though! Hear me, men of doom.

[*The Friar, MARCO, and his Roman friends close round him, holding up their hands and cloaks to stifle the sound of his reviving abjuration.*"]

It is not difficult to see here, and indeed in many other passages in Brown's writings, a vein of autobiographic reference. He too had his idea, the verification of which would enrol his name in the list of the great ones. The world would not accept it, but had flung it back upon him; at moments his own feeling over it would be that of despair or despondency; but again the mood of exultation would come, and he would spring to his feet, re-asserting it in the teeth of the "men of doom." Ah! that a glorious idea should have to be brought to the test of the laboratory! Why could not one protest in a merely speculative and poetic way against the *fifty-fifty* of material nature, and so be safe, and even have the sympathy of all but the plodders to cheer one on? For who but the plodders, who have nothing within themselves wherewith to interpret nature, could have satisfaction in the conception of a permanent *fifty-fifty* of elementary kinds of matter, or *sixty-fifty*, or whatever else the number may at last be in consequence of these new wretches of metals which are coming in upon us at the rate of the planetoids, and perhaps are in occult correspondence with those waifs? Or, if one chose to elaborate a hypothesis of a one elementary stuff the varying atomic arrangements of which might yield the so-called elements, why have

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to offer it as more than an imagination? Why get into the laboratory at all, and concern oneself with manipulations of carbon into silicon, rhodium into iron, and iron into platinum, especially if there were surer hands to come after? What if the fifty-five, or sixty-five, elements, or whatever else may be their number, should represent that state of differentiation to which terrestrial matter had already attained at the time when the earth was flung off from the sun, and what if the resources of our laboratories can effect only the resolutions of compounds back to that stage of differentiation, but must decline the question of a greater prior homogeneity as less properly chemical than metaphysical?

For many years Brown had suffered from a most painful form of internal malady, the beginnings of which were traced to the typhus he had caught in youth at St. Petersburg. After interrupting his occupations again and again, and determining his removals from place to place, this malady had at length become too surely fatal; and in June, 1856, he left Haddington, where he had been last residing, and came to a quiet suburb of Edinburgh, nominally for the sake of closer medical advice, but really to die. He had been married some six or seven years, and with all his other thoughts there now mingled that of the approaching adieu to her who was tenderly hovering round him and smoothing his pillow, and to two young children whose recollections of their father ere long would be but as of a face in a distant dream. But he bore on bravely. The death of Edward Forbes, when entering with acclamation on what seemed a new career in the Natural History Professorship of Edinburgh, had affected him not a little. It seemed to surprise him that *he*, so long an invalid, should be outliving his splendid college-fellow. But the respite was of the briefest. It was on a drizzly afternoon, late in August, if not early in September, 1856, that, chancing to be in Edinburgh, I went to inquire how Samuel Brown was, and, if possible, to see him once more. It was with a yearning at the

heart that I did see him and speak with him as he lay on his couch. He was gallant and graceful as ever; and, though he spoke to me as to one who was to continue to do duty in a world where *his* duties were over, I could hardly believe, as I came away, that the end was to be so soon. On the 20th of September he died, aged thirty-nine.

#### HUGH MILLER.

SOME time ago, in a review of one of Hugh Miller's posthumous volumes in a London newspaper, the critic, rather pooh-poohing Hugh Miller's reputation generally, observed that what was most conspicuous in him was the total absence of *genius*. He seemed to the critic to have been a diligent, ponderous kind of fellow, who had raised himself creditably from the ranks, and done pretty well, if one considered that Nature had denied him this master-quality. Now, I have read too many reviews of books to be easily surprised at anything I see in print; and, as there have been about a hundred definitions of "genius," it seemed reasonable enough that Fleet Street should have its own particular one. I had even a notion, from previous induction, that what Fleet Street, or a portion of it, considered to be "genius" consisted in advanced-opinionativeness and a power of scribbling rapidly on any subject for an hour or two after dining at the Cock. But, turn the thing which way I might, *this* criticism did surprise me. Had it been said that Hugh Miller lacked speculative subtlety, or that his geology was not up to the mark, or that he was clogged by Presbyterian theology and other forms of prejudice and provincialism, I should not have been at a loss to understand what was meant. But that what he wanted was *genius*! The word might go to the dogs as soon as the authorities in our language chose; but, so long as it was kept, it seemed to me that, if the word was applicable to the description of any mind, it was to the description of Hugh Miller's. I had known him personally in a

general way, with occasional pretty close glimpses, from 1841 to 1847; I had refreshed these older recollections of him with a long interview (still memorable to me) in his last house in Portobello only a few weeks before his death; and I had read almost all that he had written, whether in his newspaper or in books. Either I must give up all confidence in my own impressions, or Fleet Street was wrong for once.

There was, I should say, more than "genius" in Hugh Miller—there was genius in that most mysterious of its forms for which Goethe provided a name when he called it "the demonic element." What reader of Goethe's Autobiography can have forgotten that extraordinary passage at its close where, speaking of what he had in view in his *Egmont*, he expounds, as a discovery of his life, his distinct perception of an influence in nature, in history, and in individual human character, which he could not reduce to law or natural order, and could only express by supposing the intermingling of a something neither sensible nor supra-sensible with life and its affairs. The passage is hazy—perhaps purposely hazy; but it leaves all the stronger an impression. "He thought he could detect in nature, both animate and inanimate, with soul or without soul," says Goethe, speaking of himself in the third person, "something which manifests itself only in contradictions, and which therefore could not be comprehended under any idea, still less under one word. It was not god-like, for it seemed unreasonable; nor human, for it had no understanding; nor devilish, for it was beneficent; nor angelic, for it often betrayed a malicious pleasure." To this principle, in imitation of the ancients, who had had perceptions of the same kind, he had given the name of the "Demonic." "The most fearful manifestation of the Demonic," he continues, "is when it is seen predominating in some individual character. During my life I have observed several instances of this, either more closely or remotely.

"Such persons are not always the most eminent men, either morally or intellectually, and it is seldom that they recommend themselves to our affections. A tremendous energy seems to be seated in them, and they exercise a wonderful power over all creatures and even over the elements; and, indeed, who shall say how much farther such influence may extend?" Let Goethe be responsible for the observation and for the wording of it. If I understand what he meant by the "demonic element," I have hardly known a man in whom there was so much of it as in Hugh Miller.

It appeared in his very look and demeanour. Who in Edinburgh, old enough to remember him, can forget the figure of that massively-built man, roughly appressed in gray, or some dusty reddish-brown, like an ex-stonemason not ashamed of himself, or the sad, resolute look of his sandy-coloured face, the features of which seemed smaller than they were from the quantity of reddish hair that matted his great round head? There was such a prevailing impression of reddishness, and even of stony reddishness, in his approach, that one instinctively thought of his own "Old Red Sandstone." His head might have been taken as a model for that of Gurth in *Ivanhoe*, or, with a little alteration, for that of Rob Roy—for whom also he would have been no inapt model for breadth of chest, and personal strength. As a stonemason, he used to lift or roll weights twice as great as an ordinary man could manage. He had a pride in this; and one of his habits, I noticed, was an inquisitiveness as to the physical measurements and capabilities of those with whom he came in contact. "What is your height?" he would say, suddenly facing you, or "What is the girth of your chest?" looking at you sideways; and, if you were not prepared with an exact answer, he seemed surprised. He had, in particular, a malicious pleasure in inveigling his acquaintances by some stratagem to try on his hat—it being very rarely indeed that the hat found

a head over which it did not descend to the nose. Yet there had been, he said, in his native town of Cromarty two heads decidedly bigger than his—one of which belonged to the most stupid man he had known, not an actual idiot, and the other to a person very little superior. Such, or such-like, would be his talk in a casual meeting with him where the talk depended on himself. In anything like mixed or dinner-table society, which, however, he avoided as much as he could, he was almost blockishly silent. Ladies would be dying to hear Hugh Miller talk, but not a word would be got out of Hugh Miller. The impression made by his singular speechlessness, coupled with his unusually powerful look, on more than one such occasion, has been described to me as little short of awe. But, indeed, even where he was more at his ease, there was always a sensation among those about him of abnormal impenetrability. There was then, as has been hinted, no remarkable deficiency of discourse. In a fine kind of husky whisper, and with a quaint kindness and respectfulness of manner to his collocutor, whoever he might chance to be, he would confide whatever was interesting him at the moment—as that he had just had a letter from So-and-so (perhaps taking it out of his pocket), or that the parcel he had in his hand was a Dutch translation of his “Footsteps of the Creator” which they had been so good as to send him (“it’s rather droll, sir, to see yourself in Dutch”), or that he had just returned from a geological excursion and had found something curious. And so from this to that, not as if caring to speak, but with a courteous willingness to be agreeable, he would go on from topic to topic—asking some question, furnishing a reminiscence of his own to match the answer, interpolating a humorous remark, and not unfrequently citing a favourite author or repeating with feeling a scrap from an old poet. His language was choice, and the idiom not Scotch, unless when he chose, but good English—rendered

strange to the ear, however, by his peculiar far-north pronunciation. This, among other things, made a sort of interchange of the vowel-sounds *i* and *u*. The phrase “bitter cup of affliction,” for example, was pronounced nearly thus : “butter kip of affluition.” There were moments in which, from a certain heat in what he said, an outswelling of the tone, and an accompanying gesture as if he were moved to stand up and give emphasis with his clenched hand, the working in him of a great reserve of power was perceptible. But, in general, such was his quietness that even those who met him most frequently never felt that they knew him. His Free-Church friends in Edinburgh, among whom he moved most, and whose respect for him was so great that they would have accounted intimacy with him an honour, never could attain that intimacy. They had brought him from Cromarty to edit their newspaper and fight their cause ; and he had filled that post as no one else could have filled it—for he came to it not as a hireling (money could not purchase Hugh Miller), but as one whose conscience was in the cause, and who had a better knowledge of the ecclesiastical history of his country, and of the needs of the popular heart in the question of the Kirk, than was possessed by his clerical colleagues. But, though they could trust him, and admired him, they could never manage or adequately comprehend him. He walked about in Edinburgh, a mysterious mass of force, belonging to it in his own way. Still the Cromarty stone-mason at heart, and with no sense that newspaper-editing was any great promotion for him, he probably carried in him a fund of recollections from his former life—recollections, say, of half the quarries in Scotland, and of Highland straths and glens—which he could not amalgamate with present circumstances, or share with those among whom his lot was cast. Hence, probably, in part, his self-involved manner, his independence of society, the sense he left on all of a



mind shut-in and impervious.<sup>a</sup> He flashed out better in his books, or sometimes, as I have been told, amid the scenes of nature into which he was led by his geological rambles. Once, when a scientific friend was with him, and they came on a great moss-covered boulder in a solitary spot, the friend was suddenly surprised by seeing him walk up to the stone in the attitude of a man inspired. He struck it three times with his hammer, exclaiming, "Aha! old fellow, how came *you* here? Declare, declare, declare!" It was the Druidism in him, as much as the geological spirit, that had been stirred.

Druidism I have called it, and it is a very good name for a form of the "demonic element" which was marked in Hugh Miller still otherwise than I have yet described. Of Scandinavian breed in the main—for his ancestors on both sides for some generations had been sea-faring men of the Scottish north-east coast—he had yet a Celtic dash in his pedigree, derived from a certain Donald Roy, a pious Highland seer of a hundred years back, of whom there were still strange legends. Now, not only had he a singular fascination for the memory of this second-sighted ancestor, but there was a vein in his life, as it is related in his Autobiography, which it is difficult to suppose that he did not attribute to his descent from that Celtic worthy. He never speaks of second-sight, or any other of that class of phenomena, except in the rational spirit of modern science; but he tells stories of his own childhood on the faith of which the believers in the "occult" might claim him as a "medium." Thus, he tells us how, playing alone one day at the stair-foot of the long low house in Cromarty where he had been born, and where he and his mother dwelt while his father was at sea, he felt a sudden presence on the landing-place above him, and, looking up, saw "the form of a large, tall, very old man, attired in a light-blue 'great-coat' steadfastly regarding him. Though sadly frightened, he at once divined the figure to be old John Fettes,

his buccaneering great-grandfather, who had built the house, and had been dead some sixty years. Again, there is this remarkable story of what happened in the same long low house on the evening of the 10th of October, 1807. On this evening it was supposed his father's ship foundered at sea with all on board, for she left Peterhead harbour that day, and the last ever heard of her was that she had been seen tacking out into the open sea during a terrible tempest. "My mother was sitting beside the household fire, plying the cheerful needle, when the house-door, which had been left unfastened, fell open, and I was despatched from her side to shut it. What follows must be regarded as simply the recollection, though a very vivid one, of a boy who had completed his fifth year only a month before. Day had not wholly disappeared, but it was fast posting on to night, and a gray haze spread a neutral tint of dimness over every more distant object, but left the nearer ones comparatively distinct, when I saw at the open door, within less than a yard of my breast, as plainly as ever I saw anything, a dis severed hand and arm stretched towards me. Hand and arm were apparently those of a female; they bore a livid and sodden appearance; and, directly fronting me, where the body ought to have been, there was only blank, transparent space, through which I could see the dim forms of the objects beyond. I was fearfully startled, and ran shrieking to my mother, telling her what I had seen; and the house-girl, whom she next sent to shut the door, apparently affected by my terror, also returned frightened, and said that she too had seen the woman's hand; which, however, did not seem to be the case. And, finally, my mother going to the door, saw nothing, though she appeared much impressed by the extremeness of my terror and the minuteness of my description. I communicate the story as it lies fixed in my memory, without attempting to explain it. The sup-

"posed apparition may have been merely a momentary affection of the eye, of the nature described by Sir Walter Scott in his 'Demonology' and Sir David Brewster in his 'Natural Magic.' But, if so, the affection was one of which I experienced no after-return, and its coincidence, in the case, with the probable time of my father's death, seems at least curious." Notwithstanding the carefully-guarded tone of the last sentence or two, my impression is that Hugh Miller did all his life carry about with him, as Scott did, but to a greater extent, a belief in ghostly influences, in mysterious agencies of the air, earth, and water, always operating, and sometimes revealing themselves. Though he had experienced, as he says, writing in 1853, no after-return of his childish liability to visions, he seems to have had, all his life, a more than ordinary interest in stories of the supernatural, and far less disposition than men of his weight and amount of scientific information usually have to discredit the possibility of abnormal impulses and coincidences, sudden nervous horrors, and the bursting in upon man of unearthly sights and sounds. His books are full of legends of the kind, Celtic and Lowland, so told that one sees his imagination clinging to what his reason would fain reject. If he had been as cunning as Goethe, he would have formulized the thing in a high mythological expression "after the manner of the ancients." But Goethe only believed, from his observation of nature and affairs, that some agency, unseen and perhaps personal and multitudinous, did intermingle itself with nature and human affairs, causing the incalculable and the contradictory. Hugh Miller, I fancy, believed in the breaking-through of this agency so as to be visible. We all know the story of the Water-Kelpie—how, suddenly, at nightfall, people, sauntering on the bank of the river, see a strange horse-like creature rising from the middle of the ford and hear a voice neighing from it, "The hour is come, but not the man," and how at that moment there dashes down the road

sloping to the ford a traveller in hot haste who will not be stayed, who tears madly from those who would detain him, wades into the ford, misses his footing, and is swept away and drowned. If any man in Scotland, arriving by himself at nightfall at a dangerous ford, was likely to see the water-kelpie, it might have been Hugh Miller in one of his geological excursions. But I rather fancy the poor kelpie would have had the worst of it. "The hour is come and the man too, you big unchancy brute," Hugh would have called out, dashing on to grapple with it in the water, as Beowulf did with the Grendel's mother.

For (and here is a third aspect of "the demonic," for which I can vouch) there was a tremendous element of ferocity in Hugh Miller. It amounted to a disposition to kill. He was a grave, gentle, kindly, fatherly, church-going man, who would not have hurt a fly, would have lifted a child tenderly out of harm's way in the street, and would have risked his life to save even a dumb creature's; but woe betide the enemy that came athwart him when his blood was up! In this there was more of the Scandinavian than of the Celt. It appeared even in his newspaper-articles. At various times he got into personal controversies, and I know no instance in which he did not leave his adversary not only slain, but battered, bruised, and beaten out of shape. It seemed to be a principle with him—the only principle on which he could fight—that a battle must always be a *l'outrance*, that there could be no victory short of the utter extermination of the opposed organism. Hence, in the course of his editorial career, not a few immense, unseemly exaggerations of the polemical spirit—much sledge-hammering where a tap or two would have sufficed. A duel of opinions was apt to become with him a duel of reputations and of persons. There were instances, I understand, in which, coming to a difference even with leaders on his own side in which he thought his own independence involved, he intimated beforehand to those concerned that he did not wish for a rupture,

but that, if it was to be, he was quite prepared, and it must then be Hugh Miller in Scotland against whoever else. And, as he was dangerous to deal with if roused in a literary controversy, so, I should say, if meddled with in the field or on the road. Take the following story from his *First Impressions of England and its People*:—He is on a tour through England for the recovery of his health, sometimes on foot and sometimes by rail, visiting the spots that have been familiar to him by name from boyhood for their associations with eminent names or occurrences in English Literature. He has come one evening by rail as far as Wolverton, meaning to sleep there and walk over the next morning to Olney, dear to him on the poet Cowper's account. But it so chances that the great fight between Caunt and Bendigo for the championship is about to come off in that neighbourhood, and all the blackguards in England are assembled in Wolverton. Not a bed is to be had for a plain wayfarer, and, following advice given him, he walks on in the moonlight to Newport Pagnell, a distance of four miles. "The way was lonely enough; nor were the few straggling travellers whom I met of a kind suited to render its solitariness more cheerful. About half-way on, where the road runs between tall hedges, two fellows started out towards me, one from each side of the way. 'Is this the road,' asked one, 'to Newport Pagnell?' 'Quite a stranger here,' I replied, without slackening my pace; 'don't belong to the kingdom even.' 'No!' said the same fellow, increasing his speed as if to overtake me; 'to what kingdom, then?' 'Scotland,' I said, turning suddenly round, somewhat afraid of being taken behind by a bludgeon. The two fellows sheered off in double-quick time, the one who had already addressed me muttering, 'More like an Irishman, I think;' and I saw no more of them. I had luckily a brace of loaded pistols about me, and had at the moment a trigger under each forefinger." Here I seem to see Hugh Miller as he was throughout his life. He

was a massive, self-controlled, religious, frugal, and strictly-principled man, walking peaceably on the Queen's highway, and with an interest in all things quiet and lovely; but he believed in the rife-ness of life-and-death forces around one, the possibility of upspringing murderous contingencies, human and superhuman, no less than if he had been in the thirteenth century; and he had that within him which answered to them, anticipated them, and policed himself. You overtook him geologizing at leisure in some out-of-the-way place, or you came upon him on some country road, turning his holiday into a pilgrimage to spots of historical note; he was the sort of man you would like to enter into conversation with, and he made no objection; you walked on a bit with him, your interest in him gradually rising into wonder; you felt, if you had any discernment, that he was, naturally and by culture, a grand kind of man; but, all the while, he did not know who *you* were, you see; you might be the devil, or one of his gentlemen of darkness, for all he knew; and so, while he is talking to you, what are his fingers doing? Playing with the triggers of two loaded pistols! A whirr of the brain, a momentary hallucination, even a mechanical mistake, and God knows what might happen!

#### DE QUINCEY.

It was in 1843 that De Quincey, who had at several times before taken up his quarters at Edinburgh—in order, I suppose, to be near Wilson—came again into that neighbourhood, there, as it proved, to end his strange dream of a life. He was then about fifty-seven years of age, and he lived on till 1859, for the most part either in Edinburgh itself or in the snug adjacent village of Lasswade, where he had relatives to tend him, and where he lies buried.

An account of De Quincey during these last sixteen years of his life would be a most singular memoir, if only it could be written. But the materials for any coherent account of him do not exist. What he did, or where he was,

from week to week, no one had any means of keeping reckoning but himself. He came and went, appeared and disappeared, and that was all. By far the most graphic sketch of him in his last Edinburgh period that I know of is that contained in Mr. John Hill Burton's recent delightful volume *The Book-Hunter*. Among several portraits of mighty book-hunters known in the flesh to Mr. Burton, and all lovingly drawn, there is introduced that of a certain "Thomas Papaverius," which we may translate "Thomas of the Poppies," if any translation is necessary. "In 'what mood or shape,'" says Mr. Burton, "shall he be brought forward? Shall it be as first we met at the table of Lucullus, whither he was seduced by the 'false pretence that he would there meet with one who entertained novel and anarchical opinions regarding the 'Golden Ass of Apuleius? No one speaks of waiting dinner for him. He will come and depart at his own sweet will, neither burdened by punctualities, nor burdening others by exacting them. The festivities of the afternoon are far from when a commotion is heard in the hall as if some dog or other stray animal had forced his way in. The instinct of a friendly guest tells him of the arrival—he opens the door and fetches in the little stranger. What can it be? A street-boy of some sort? His costume, in fact, is a boy's duffle great-coat, very threadbare, with a hole in it, and buttoned tight to the chin, where it meets the fragments of a particoloured belcher handkerchief; on his feet are list-shoes, covered with snow, for it is a stormy winter-night; and the trousers—some one suggests that they are inner linen garments blackened with writing-ink, but that Papaverius never would have been at the trouble so to disguise them. What can be the theory of such a costume? The simplest thing in the world—it consisted of the fragments of apparel nearest at hand. Had chance thrown to him a court single-breasted coat, with a bishop's apron, a kilt, and top-boots, in these he would have made

"his entry." Mr. Burton goes on to describe the talk of this queer diminutive being so oddly introduced and apparelled—that silver talk of De Quincey of which the world has heard so much. Most exactly true is the account to all I have ever heard of Papaverius. Who, in Edinburgh or any where else, would not have delighted in the prospect of getting the opium-eater to his house, to dinner with a few friends, or more quietly afterwards, so as to have an evening with him? Nothing was easier, if you knew the way. To invite him, by note or personally, was of no use. He would promise—promise most punctually, and, if he saw you doubted, reassure you with a dissertation on the beauty of punctuality; but, when the time came, and you were all met, a hundred to one you were without your De Quincey. But send a cab for him, and some one in it to fetch him, and he came meekly, unresistingly, as if it was his doom, and he conceived it appointed that, in case of resistance, he should be carried out by the nape of the neck. It was no compliment to you. Anybody might have taken possession of him, unless by inadvertence time had been given him to escape by the back-window under pretext of dressing. So, if you knew the way, you had your De Quincey. And was it not a treat? Hour after hour there was the stream, the sweet and subtle eddying on, of the silver talk. But at length the small hours arrive, and one after another goes, and you yourself are fagged, and a little sleepy. Never mind! If a dissertation on sleep or on fatigue will reanimate you, and make you good for another hour, you may have it for the asking. It begins, oh horror! to dawn upon you that you have brought on yourself a problem. You have got your Papaverius, but how are you to be released from him? There are periods in everything, however; and, at last, on some impulse of his own, or some suasion of circumstance, the gentle, weirdly, and, in truth, exquisitely sensitive creature would take his departure. Out he would go "into the Night," as

the Germans have taught us to express and spell it; and what became of him no one knew and no one cared. Ah! Reader, you may be the greatest man in the world and the most delicious of talkers, but if, when the street-door is locked behind you, and you have gone out into the Night with a capital N, there are three persons in the world that really follow you with their sympathies, and care what becomes of you, fortune has been good to you!

My own glimpses of De Quincey, I must say, did not present him to me in any such extreme of helpless quaintness. The first time I saw him was most pleasantly one evening in a room high up in one of the tall houses of the Old Town. He came in charge of a strong, determined man, who took all the necessary trouble. There were but a few present, and all went nicely. In addition to the general impression of his diminutiveness and fragility, one was struck with the peculiar beauty of his head and forehead, rising disproportionately high over his small wrinkly visage and gentle deep-set eyes. In his talk, which was in the form of really harmonious and considerate colloquy, and not at all in that of monologue, I remember chiefly two incidents. The birthday of some one present having been mentioned, De Quincey immediately said, "O that is the anniversary of the battle of So-and-so," and he seemed ready to catch as many birthdays as might be thrown him on the spot, and almanack them all round in a similar manner from his memory. The other incident was his use of a phrase very beautiful in itself, and which seemed characteristic of his manner of thinking. Describing some visionary scene or other, he spoke of it as consisting of "discs of light and interspaces of gloom," and I noticed that, with all the fine distinctness of the phrase, both optical and musical, it came from him with no sort of consciousness of its being out of the way in talk, and with no reference whatever to its being appreciated or not by those around him, but simply because, whoever he might

be talking to, he would be thinking like De Quincey. That evening passed, and though I saw him once or twice again, it is the last sight that I remember next best. It must have been, I think, in 1846, on a summer afternoon. A friend, a stranger to Edinburgh, was walking with me in one of the pleasant, quiet country lanes near Edinburgh. Meeting us, and the sole moving thing in the lane besides ourselves, came a small figure, not untidily dressed, but with his hat pushed far up in front over his forehead, and hanging on his hind-head, so that the back-rim must have been resting on his coat-collars. At a little distance I recognised it to be De Quincey; but, not considering myself entitled to interrupt his meditations, I only whispered the information to my friend, that he might not miss what the look at such a celebrity was worth. So we passed him, giving him the wall. Not unnaturally, however, after he passed, we turned round for the pleasure of a back view of the wee intellectual wizard. Whether my whisper and our glances had alarmed him, as a ticket-of-leave man might be rendered uneasy in his solitary walk by the scrutiny of two passing strangers, or whether he had some recollection of me (which was likely enough, as he seemed to forget nothing) I do not know; but we found that he too had stopped and was looking round at us. Apparently scared at being caught doing so, he immediately wheeled round again, and hurried his pace towards a side-turning in the lane, into which he disappeared, his hat still hanging on the back of his head. That was my last sight of De Quincey; but a good many years afterwards I had the pleasure of receiving, in a circuitous manner, a kind word of recognition from him, on a ground independent of any recollection he may have retained of my juvenile Edinburgh existence. This was just before his death, and one was glad to know by report that, then, in his old age, this eccentric man of genius, this wise, and erudite, and beautiful spirit—this English Essayist the real worth of whose remains, as compared with



those of Lord Macaulay, will be found, I venture to say, as that of a mass of wrought silver against an equal mass of gold and copper—had let his wandering habits be brought within bounds, and was ministered to by the hands of willing affection. "I have always thought it a wonderful instance of the power of domestic care and manage-

"ment," says Mr. Hill Burton, "that, through the ministrations of a devoted offspring, this strange being was so cared for, that those who came in contact with him then, and then only, might have admired him as the patriarchal head of an agreeable and elegant household."

## RICHARD COBDEN.

BY PROFESSOR GOLDWIN SMITH.

THE honours paid by men of all parties to Richard Cobden at his death seem to dispose of the charges so constantly levelled against him during his life, of want of chivalry and want of patriotism. Men will honour in his tomb an opponent whom, from extreme difference of opinion, they would not—whom perhaps from the evil exigencies of party they could not—have honoured while he was alive; but they will not honour what is really sordid and mean even in the tomb. Englishmen might forgive and forget, they might even regard with gratitude, the author of patriotic, though misguided counsels, when the lips by which those counsels had been uttered had become suddenly mute: but even when touched by mortality they would not forgive or forget treason.

If "chivalry" means anything, it means the religious consecration of a man's powers to the redress of wrong. The powers consecrated in the Middle Ages were those of the soldier; the wrong redressed was the greatest of which mediæval Christendom could form a conception—the violation of pilgrims on their way to the sepulchre of Christ. In these days, the powers to be consecrated are other than those of the soldier; the wrongs to be redressed are different and less romantic. And no powers ever were more thoroughly, or (as religion was at the root of his character) we may say more religiously,

consecrated to the redress of wrong than those of Richard Cobden. No Sir Galahad ever sought the Holy Graal with a more disinterested and passionate ardour than he sought cheap bread for the people and social justice. No champion of Christendom ever went forth to combat giants and enchanters with more fervent faith or in a spirit of more intense self-devotion than he went forth to combat the demon of war. Free-trade and Non-intervention are less poetical than "Save the Sepulchre!" the figure of the Manchester cotton-spinner was much less picturesque than that of Tancred. The character of the Crusaders was the same.

It is a different question whether the course which he would have recommended to his country would always have been the most chivalrous. Most of us would probably think that he carried his doctrine of non-intervention too far. The world is still full of armed tyranny and wrong, which can, at present, be kept in check only by the fear of armed intervention. This he did not sufficiently see, and he naturally overrated the efficacy of commercial motives in restraining such military and territorial ambition as that of the French nation. In this he paid his tribute to the infirmity of human nature, which can seldom help treating the new truth as though it were the only truth, and pushing it to its full logical consequences before its hour.

Constant collision with one extreme—the extreme of universal meddling and diplomatic wars—almost inevitably drove him into the other extreme. But there was nothing sordid or mean about the motives or the bearing of the man. In opposing wars and the policy which lead to them, he faced odium to which so kindly and genial a nature cannot have been callous, and he flung away prizes which were quite within his reach, and the desire of which probably no man who enters public life ever entirely casts out of his heart. War ministers and the advocates of a war policy are lavish enough of the blood of other men; but it is a delusion to think that they thereby display personal courage, or entitle themselves to tax with cowardice an opponent who is stemming the tide of passion on which they float to popularity and power. You will find a man ready to declaim in favour of a popular war who, as you may feel sure, would not face the shot, would perhaps not even face the loss of his dinner, possibly not even hot sherry and cold soup. The soldier who bravely shed his blood at Inkerman, and the statesman who endured the reproach of a "cotton-spinner" to prevent the soldier's blood from being shed, had something in common which was not shared by politicians who sat at home and made the war, much less by those who allowed themselves to be drawn into it against their convictions.

Cobden, when he denounced war, had not before his mind the uprising of a whole nation in a great moral cause. He had before his mind politicians carrying on war with hired soldiers, and money wrung from the people by the hand of power in a cause which, too often, was very far from being moral or even great.

We have said that religion lay at the root of Cobden's character. His firm belief in God was, as all who knew him intimately will agree with us in thinking, a great source of his fearlessness as a social reformer; nor, though absolutely free from any taint of sectarianism or bigotry, did he ever readily take to

his heart those whom he believed to be devoid of religion. Not only was he a practical believer in God; he was a Christian in the ordinary sense of the term; and, for that matter, there was no reason why a dean should not attend his funeral, and a bishop be willing to read the service over his grave. He would no more have thought of propagating religion than he would have thought of propagating commerce by any force but that of conviction; but he had a distinct preference for Christian morality and civilization. And therefore, in the case of the war with Russia, besides his dislike of war in general, he could not fail to be specially opposed to one which was to rivet the Mahometan yoke (the foulness of which he had seen with his own eyes in his early travels) on the neck of Christian nations.

Cobden was not wanting in love of his country. He had spent his life in her service, and devoted all his faculties to improving the condition of her people. If he was wanting in professions of love towards her, it was as Cordelia was wanting in professions of love towards Lear. But he loved her in subordination to, or rather as a part of, humanity. He was an intense practical believer in the community of nations, and acted under an intense conviction that the interests, high and low, of each member of that community were inseparably blended, in the councils of Providence, with those of the rest. If it was of the commercial interests of nations that in public he principally and almost exclusively talked, this was chiefly because his modesty led him to confine himself to his special subject, and to pay an almost exaggerated deference to others upon theirs. He distinctly saw and deeply felt that commerce was the material basis on which Providence had ordained that a community of a higher kind should be built. And if he recognised the community of nations as above any one nation, did not the Crusaders in the same way recognise a Christendom?

The policy of charity, courtesy, mutual

good-will and forbearance which he preached, was, after all, pretty nearly identical with the Christianity which England proclaims not only as her established religion, but as the palladium of her empire. For a moment, in the case of the bombardment of Canton, this policy was decided to be contrary to the national honour; but the decision was reversed in the case of Kagosima. It is a source of national weakness only if the enmity of your neighbours is a source of strength. The Free-trade treaties are fast making England a member of a great commercial confederation, the other members of which could scarcely fail to stand by us in case of an attack on the common trade.

The success, commercial and political, of the French Treaty made Cobden too blind, as we should say, to the menacing magnitude of the French armaments, and to the continued existence of the spirit of aggression which those armaments imply. He was also a little too tolerant of the military despotism of an autocrat who had embraced the doctrines of Free-trade. We have felt this ourselves as strongly as the rest of the world. But it should be remembered (especially when his conduct is compared with that of public men who pretend to be the peculiar representatives of English spirit) that, in his personal bearing towards the Emperor,

he studiously maintained the reserve and the dignity of an English freeman. That he would have advised his country tamely to allow France to commit actual injustice in Europe never was proved, though no doubt these were the questions on which his rational admirers would have most dreaded to see him tried.

If his peace and non-intervention policy was not that of a Chatham, it was at least not that of the mock-Chat-hams. If he had been Foreign Minister he would not have held out to Denmark expectations of armed assistance; but, on the other hand, he would not have had, when the time of need came, to put her off with sympathetic declamations. He was an "international man," to use the phrase of the French Minister, before the age of international men had fully come. If, with the morning rays of an enlarged morality shining on him, he sometimes showed too little regard for the narrow patriotism which had been the most comprehensive virtue of preceding ages, this, again, was a fault in him, but it was one which the next generation will easily forgive.

The Bishop of Oxford calls Cobden "the great Sussex Englishman." The son of an English yeoman, proud of his birth, he has been borne from a most English home to a grave among the English hills. And who will say that he is not worthy of that grave?

#### MR. JOHN STUART MILL FOR WESTMINSTER.

It must be presumed that those who have been instrumental in bringing Mr. Mill forward for Westminster, and have proclaimed him as a candidate on terms—those sketched by himself—very consonant with his own great position of world-wide fame and intellectual supremacy, but unusual in English elections, and not unlikely perhaps, to have created some difficulties, know what they are about, see their way to success, and are determined to

succeed. Such a name should not have been lightly put forward. Mr. Mill has said, as he was well entitled to say, when asked to allow himself to be proposed as a candidate: "I should esteem it a great honour to be member for Westminster; I esteem it a great honour to have been thought of as a candidate; I should wish, if I am to be elected, to owe every step of my election, as I owe this invitation, to a spontaneous judgment of the labours of my life. My

opinions on nearly all political questions of interest are before the public in books, to your knowledge and good opinion of which I owe your invitation; any further explanations which may be desired I am ready to give in writing, but I cannot present myself in public. I have not sought this honour, much as I esteem it, and I do not wish to interrupt my occupations as a writer unless called on by the election of my fellow-citizens to serve in the House of Commons. Neither my principles nor my means will permit me to spend money for a seat in Parliament; I have no personal objects to serve by going into the House of Commons, and I should not think it fair to be required to undergo arduous labour any more than to spend money for the purpose. It does not indeed consist with my habits and occupations to canvass and go through a round of public meetings. Further, it would not in general be possible for me to attend to matters of local business; I think it not unlikely that this may be considered a disqualification for Westminster; I give you due notice of it. My own opinion is that, if I can be of any use in Parliament, it would be by devoting myself there to the same subjects which have hitherto employed my habitual thoughts out of Parliament. I will give no pledges; by my works and character, which have led you to invite me, I will be judged; if I am elected, I shall never disguise from my constituents my intentions or my motives." Such are the terms on which Mr. Mill has consented to be proposed as a candidate. It was for those who invited him to say, "On these terms we accept you, believing that on these terms you will be elected," or to say, "We fear that these terms may make difficulties, and we beg you to reconsider some of them." They have said without hesitation, "We accept you as a candidate on your own terms, you shall not be at one shilling expense; we do not require you to attend meetings, or, if your objection extends so far, even to appear on the hustings. We require no pledges; it shall be left to

you, when you are elected, to do as you think right about our local business." On these terms a committee of Westminster electors have launched Mr. Mill as a candidate.

This is an election likely to be carried by enthusiasm—by such enthusiasm as, in 1832, made Mr. Poulett Thomson member for Manchester, without his appearing, or consenting, and even against his will, because he was not only Vice-President of the Board of Trade in the Government which had just carried the Reform Act, but also a Free Trader and the known friend of Jeremy Bentham and James Mill;<sup>1</sup> or by such enthusiasm (not to mention other instances) as in 1847, after the repeal of the Corn Laws, made Richard Cobden member for the West Riding of Yorkshire, and Charles Villiers member for South Lancashire, the former being at the time abroad, and the latter not appearing or taking part. For the generation of a similar enthusiasm for Mr. Mill's election for Westminster, his fame is the

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Poulett Scrope's "Life of Lord Sydenham," and Prentice's "History of the Anti-Corn-Law League." The Liberal electors of Manchester would take no refusal. "He even went the length," says Mr. Scrope, "of authorizing Mr. Loyd's committee to publish a denial on his part of any intention to offer himself for Manchester, and a declaration that he had been posted as a candidate without his authority. His enthusiastic admirers, however, would take no denial; and, in spite of everything, persisted in canvassing the borough for him; and the result proved that they had judged correctly of their fellow-citizens, who were too high-principled to require a personal canvass, or even an address, from a statesman sufficiently well known to them by his public character and former parliamentary conduct." Mr. Poulett Thomson was returned both for Dover, for which he had sat since 1826, and for Manchester, and he then elected to sit for Manchester. His first election for Dover, says Mr. Scrope, cost him 3,000*l*. Jeremy Bentham had on that occasion canvassed for him. "Bentham had taken so great a liking for him, that he broke through all the habits of his hermit-like existence, actually took up his residence at Dover, canvassed daily for him, opened his house and allowed himself to be accessible to all Mr. Thomson's friends, and mingled in the contest in a manner which surprised all who knew his retiring disposition, but which strongly marked the interest he took in his young friend's prospects."

warrant. He is one of the kings of thought, and his kingdom stretches through the civilized world. Not only throughout the English dominions, but wherever there are learned and studious men, friends of good government and human improvement—in North America, in France, in Germany, in Italy—the election for Westminster will be anxiously watched.

Some people say Mr. Mill is a mere theorist, not fitted for the House of Commons. Language of this sort hardly merits a reply; but it is well that it should be known that Mr. Mill, besides being a philosopher and writer on political philosophy, has been all his life a keen observer of political life and action, and a careful student in detail of all practical questions of interest for British citizens. He has in time been, indeed, a voluminous writer on current politics. His earliest writings of this sort were in the *Westminster Review*, founded by Bentham and his celebrated father, James Mill; and there will be a special appropriateness in Mr. Mill's election for Westminster. Some three or four and thirty years ago, in the days of the Reform Bill, many regularly read with interest monthly criticisms on current politics, under the name of "Notes of the Month," written by John Stuart Mill, in a magazine which at that time exercised an extensive intellectual influence,—the *Monthly Repository*, edited by Mr. W. J. Fox, who was afterwards member for Oldham. In the beginning of 1835, during the short administration of Sir Robert Peel, when he had been unexpectedly called from Rome by King William, after the dismissal of Lord Melbourne, the *London Review* was set on foot by Sir William Molesworth. Among the chief contributors were Sir William himself, who was editor, Charles Buller, John Arthur Roebuck, James Mill, the father, and John Stuart Mill, the son. The chief light of that *Review* was John Mill. Many of his contributions to that *Review* (which soon changed its name to *London and Westminster*, absorbing

the old *Westminster*<sup>1</sup>) on philosophy and literature have been republished in a collected form;<sup>2</sup> not so however his political articles. The articles reviewing the proceedings of the legislature and conduct of parties were generally written either by Sir William Molesworth or John Stuart Mill—chiefly by the latter. Every writer in the *Review* had his distinctive signature; Sir William Molesworth's articles were signed with his initials, John Mill's with A. Let any one who doubts whether John Stuart Mill can descend to practical politics read the political articles signed A. in the *London Review* and *London and Westminster Review*, from 1835 to 1840. In these articles Mr. Mill appears constantly as the anxious observer, the counsellor, the critic, the animator and inspirer of a party of parliamentary Liberals, not inconsiderable in number and very distinguished in talents and character, which held an important independent position in the House of Commons in those years of Lord Melbourne's administration. That party comprised, besides those who have been named as Mr. Mill's co-operators in the *Review*, Mr. Hume, Mr. Grote, Mr. Leader, Mr. Ewart, Mr. C. Villiers, and Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer, who is now in other political company. No opportunity was missed in these articles of recognising and celebrating Mr. Hume's great services. The following passage is part of a reply to a conservative statement that the agitation for Parliamentary Reform had no connexion with practical grievances, but sprang from mere love of change and theories of government:—

<sup>1</sup> It became *London and Westminster Review* in 1836, and continued under that name till March, 1840, when it passed into entirely different hands, and took the old name of *Westminster Review*. Some time before this change the proprietorship of the *London and Westminster Review* had been transferred from Sir William Molesworth to Mr. John Mill.

<sup>2</sup> "Dissertations and Discussions, Political, Philosophical, and Historical." 2 vols. 8vo. 1859.



"The movement which gave existence to the Reform Bill, dates in reality from the period when Mr. Hume commenced his memorable exposures of the almost inconceivable profligacies of our public expenditure. He was soon aided by writers (among whom Mr. Black, of the *Morning Chronicle*, and Mr. Fonblanque, of the *Examiner*, were the most conspicuous) who, by their repeated exposures, made the people sensible of the enormities in the administration of justice, especially those of the unpaid magistracy. Was there not, during all the same period, a growing disapprobation of the corn-laws? of the game-laws? of slavery? of the restrictions on industry? of tithes? of corporation abuses? of the vices of the law? of the inefficiency and extravagancies of the Church Establishment? of the atrocious principle of holding Ireland in subjection by foreign bayonets to the most profligately tyrannical of native oligarchies?"<sup>1</sup>

In the House of Lords, Lord Durham was Mr. Mill's hoped-for leader. In 1838, that nobleman went as Governor-General to Canada, taking with him Charles Buller as his chief adviser. Mr. Mill, in the *Review*, elaborately treated Canadian politics, expounded Lord Durham's policy, and defended his proceedings in articles which at this moment, when our North American colonies are being united in one great federation, are full of practical interest and value.

Shortly after Lord Durham's return from Canada, in the number of the *Review* for April, 1839, was an article by Mr. Mill on the "Reorganization of the Reform Party," urged in order to meet the great efforts which were then being made by the Conservatives to recover themselves from their defeat by the Reform Act. This was the proposed broad basis of reorganization:—

"We well know that the Reform party of the empire ought not to be, cannot be, radical in any narrow sectarian sense. There may be many colonies in a country, but there can be only two parties. What we must have to oppose to the great Conservative party is the whole Liberal party, not some mere section of it,—a combination which shall exclude no shade of opinion in which one sober or practicable man can be found, one man capable of adapting rational means to honest ends; a phalanx, stretching from the Whig-Radicals at one extremity (if we may so term those among the persons who call themselves Whigs who are real Liberals) to the Ultra-Radicals and the

working classes on the other. Such a phalanx has existed; and by its support the Grey ministry was enabled to carry the Reform Bill. We wish to see this great party reconstructed. We are persuaded that it can be; and that, to accomplish this, it only requires a popular leader."

Mr. Mill wrote in the same article as follows about the working-classes, four-and-twenty years ago, before the repeal of the Corn Laws, and before Sir Francis Baring's Budget of 1841, which gave the first great parliamentary impulse, after the Reform Act, to fiscal and commercial reform:—

"What, then, has a liberal statesman to offer to the working classes? The greatest thing of all; and a thing which must precede Universal Suffrage,—if Universal Suffrage is ever to come without a civil war. *He must redress the practical grievances of the working classes.* They are now the *Pariahs* of society; not a voice is ever raised in the Legislature for their good, except it be for some restraint upon their liberty or curtailment of their pleasures: an end must be put to this. The motto of a Radical politician should be Government *by means of* the middle for the working classes. One of the most original and powerful of recent political writers (Mr. Wakefield, in his 'England and America') has expressed the principle with admirable aptness and force:—Until Universal Suffrage be possible,—to govern the country as it would be necessary to govern it if there were Universal Suffrage and the people were well educated and intelligent."

During the last five-and-twenty years Mr. Mill has principally devoted himself to the composition of those works on political economy, logic, and political philosophy which have made his widespread renown. Two of these subjects cover a large portion of practical politics; and Mr. Mill has, ever and anon, appeared before the public to illuminate by the light of general principles some question on which men's minds were set. Thus, last year he explained opportunely, in a short letter in the *Daily News*, England's duty of branding with censure international misdeeds of foreign governments, as distinct from material intervention. Among the "Papers relating to the Reorganization of the Civil Service," collected in 1854, in support of the adoption of competitive examinations, will be found a contribution from Mr.

<sup>1</sup> *London and Westminster Review*, Vol. iii. No. xxv. p. 291. Article on Sir John Walsh's "Contemporary History."

Mill. He thus sweeps away in a few sentences the hackneyed objection, bred of caste, that government clerks and East India civil servants would no longer be gentlemen :—

“Another objection is that, if appointments are given to talent, the public offices will be filled with low people, without the breeding or the feelings of gentlemen. If, as this objection supposes, the sons of gentlemen cannot be expected to have as much ability and instruction as the sons of low people, it would make a strong case for social changes of a more extensive character. If the sons of gentlemen would not, even under the stimulus of competition, maintain themselves on an equality of intellect and attainments with youths of a lower rank, how much more below the mark must they be with their present monopoly; and to how much greater an extent than the friends of the measure allege must the efficiency of the Public Service be at present sacrificed to their incompetency! And more: if, with advantages and opportunities so vastly superior, the youth of the higher classes have not honour enough, or energy enough, or public spirit enough, to make themselves as well qualified as others for the station which they desire to maintain, they are not fit for that station, and cannot too soon step out of it and give place to better people. I have not this unfavourable opinion of them; I believe that they will fairly earn their full share of every kind of distinction when they are no longer able to obtain them unearned.”

But it is in the articles of the *London and London and Westminster* from 1835 to 1840 that Mr. Mill employed his mind and pen more than at any other period of his life on current politics; and in those any who may need to be convinced will find the strongest proofs of his power of interesting himself in English political struggles and applying his principles and knowledge to the treatment of parliamentary questions. Yet those numerous articles are mingled with many others on subjects of poetry and general philosophy. The time is past of vulgar abuse of philosophic politicians and political economists; but, if any vestige of old prejudices remain, it is well that the electors of Westminster have undertaken the task of carrying to the House of Commons one whose eminent philosophy embraces all

letters, art, and imagination, combines the ancient and the new, reform and tradition, the principle of permanence and the principle of progression, the practical spirit of Bentham and the reverent ideal politics of Coleridge—is catholic, practical, genial, sympathetic—

“Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,  
But musical as is Apollo's lute.”

We are on the eve of a general election, and what that is is too well known. Rank, family interest, local connexion, money will determine the choice of by far the greatest number of constituencies. In the operation of these influences there will be much that is legitimate and proper, and much that is deplorable, pitiable, and corrupt. Immense sums of money will be spent in enforced extravagance and in bribery and corruption. The evil of bribery has been increasing at every general election since that of 1841. It has been denounced after each succeeding general election by almost all the most eminent statesmen. So it has been each time since the Reform Act till now, and so again will it be this time. How few are the constituencies—to be counted probably on one's fingers—where, as has lately been proclaimed to the honour of Rochdale, the Liberal electors would scorn to oblige their candidate to go canvassing from house to house or incur any expense for his election!

“Mammon wins his way where seraphs might despair.”

How many are the constituencies where the eminent man who is proposed for Westminster would have a particle of chance against a peer's son, or a rich railway director, or any one ready to spend some thousand pounds? The electors of Westminster who have brought forward Mr. Mill have set the nation a fine example.

W. D. C.